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BY

DIRK GORA

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Ich ruf es in die Welt hinaus,
Und mag es laut und schrill ertönen,
Und tut's den zarten Ohren weh—
Ich kann dem Drang nicht wehren!
Des Herzens Not verlangt Gehör,
Die Welt, sie muss es hören!
Denn unsrer Seelen Not ist schwer;
Es muss der Schrei die Lösung bringen!

INTRODUCTION

This diary has been written during those fateful days and months when the tragic fratricide, or call it civil war, was at its climax in Southern Russia, a territory which now is known as the Ukraine. Most of the severe fighting during the revolutionary wars occurred north of the Black and the Azov Seas. The steppe to both sides of the Dnieper for hundreds and hundreds of miles is the most fertile land in the whole of Russia, if not in all Europe. Because of the fertility of this region Germany fought her way into that land during the Great War. When Germany was defeated in 1918 her hold on this distant country weakened instantly, and in a few weeks the Germans either had left on their own accord, or they were driven out. In the East of this region, north of the Caucasus and between the Azov Sea and the Caspian Lake, the White army, composed of reactionary forces under Denikin, had organized to fight the Bolsheviks. As soon as the Ukraine was evacuated by the Germans the Denikin forces moved into the granary of Russia. What happened to this movement is well known. Once more this fertile territory became a region of anarchy. There came such adventurers as Gregoryev and Petlyura, the Ukrainian nationalists, ruthless in their struggle for dominance. Various kinds of Anarchists pushed the loosely organized forces about, creating a chaos which at times came near to driving the poor inhabitants of these villages into despair, helpless as they were in the hands of merciless robbers and murderers.

The most cruel outlaws were the "Black" detachments of Makhno-Anarchists. Makhno was a sly and shrewd leader who acted in the fashion described by the Romans as veni vidi vici (I came, I saw, I conquered). In fact, Makhno fascinated thousands of unattached people. These men were either possessed by hatred against all who were not Black, or they were simply eager to loot the country. They were from 25 to 30 years of age. The majority had been previously prepared for their bloody profession in military service by Tzarist officers. This kind of training, indeed, had not been beneficial to their characters. Then came the destructive influence of war time. And now, after eight years of systematic drill for killing, arose the opportunity for slaughter on individual initiative. Their brutality was not as much the expression of an eagerness for real fighting, where, after all, one's own life is at stake, as it was spite against defenseless settlers of Western races, Swedes, Swiss, Germans, and Dutch.

This diary, then, relates in the main the tribulations of the Dutch settlers who had succeeded in establishing flourishing farms and towns on both sides of the Dnieper stream. They had served already during the war as scape goats when the Tzaristic estate owners were trembling for fear of revolt against the prevailing system of land ownership. The Panslavists sought to direct the anger of the peasants toward people of foreign extraction although these "foreigners" had lived for over a century in Russia. They had been invited in the past to settle there in order to introduce better methods of farming. They were not thanked for their con-

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Many of the surviving Dutch farmers have since left Russia and emigrated into the hospitable land of Canada. Today over 22,000 of those sufferers are settled as farmers in Ontario as well as the western provinces.

1930 THE AUTHOR.

Khortiza, September 15, 1919

For five days I have been here on the bank of the Dnieper. From our beautiful sunny house, far up on the slope, I overlook the peaceful settlement which lies below, as if placed there to be carefully preserved after having been brought over from a foreign land. Indeed, these colonists came here some hundred and thirty years ago from distant western countries. Now I turn my eyes to the stream quietly flowing on and on; it makes me think that these waters, coming down from far away, have deposited here a bit of that remote country. Here has grown up a generation which speaks its own language and has its own ways of thinking, akin to the foreign stock from which it descended, though all connection with the parent country was long ago severed.

This colony of Dutch Mennonites is the oldest in South Russia. It was surely a hard struggle for these persecuted, religious people who, after a long and toilsome journey, at last settled down here on the wild steppe These settlers, conserving their habits of European civilization, were always looked upon as intruders, though they came upon invitation of Russian rulers. As time passed there grew up in this vicinity some twenty farm villages, a population of steady-working, earnest-minded men and women. The first primitive huts have disappeared long since; they were built one hundred and thirty years ago and were replaced when prosperity came.

Along the valley, besides the fertile farms, are some fine corn mills, factories producing harvesting machines, and there, on the slope, are the brickworks with high chimneys. Going through the streets one notices banks, stores, schools, and hospitals. It is true, through war and revolution all has deteriorated and everything needs some repairing. But after seeing these industrious people, I realize that agriculture as well as trade and commerce, school and charity work will revive if only these troublesome times pass by.

I am seated near the window looking out above the roofs into a far distance—all steppe, all around, the great vast Russian plain, and I know from geography that one can walk over it thousands of miles from west to east. In this plain lie hundreds and thousands of Russian villages and towns and cities, dreaming under a high blue sky.

Did I say dreaming? It used to be so; we were wont to look upon them in that way. But no—the dream is all over now. The villages have awakened. And yet that dreamy Mushik of the villages is only half awake, has not yet fully found himself. Thoughtlessly and rudely he stretches out his hand, held back by no instinctive restraint.

Today, however, as I look through the branches of a big pear tree and see a piece of the lovely landscape, it appears to me that around us is peace and rest. I am inclined to cherish such a belief just now. I have not come in touch with these people living down there in the valley. I do not know what is agitating their souls, neither do I know what rumours there are about. I do not want to know. A state of rest and peace, that is what I long for just now.

But in speaking of peace, it must be understood, of course, that all conceptions are relative. My ideas of order and peace are different from those I had in Western Europe a year ago. There, surely, nobody would call conditions orderly when the railway ceases to work and all traffic stops. Nobody there is content without newspapers, or with officers who steal. Neither would they be unruffled if housebreakings occurred every night such as we are used to here under the present regime of General Denikin.

But conditions could be much worse than they are now; this we know from recent experience. Therefore I am ready to call the present condition peaceful and quiet.

After all, I find consolation in the thought that we are living in an age of new birth. . .

Hold on—is there any use of making endless considerations and observations? Have I not already written reams of such stuff, thoughts about evolution in our time and in our country? Yes, I have.

I have chosen this beautiful spot here on the Dnieper as a fitting place to rest after I wearied of that fight with ideas about political and social reforms. I surely do not belong to those who would like to see the old conditions and traditions come back. No. I turn my eyes steadily toward the future, towards progress. But just now I want to stand aside for a little while to balance my last experiences and come to a clear conclusion.

I feel so well after these few days here. The attractive landscape in the Dnieper valley has guided me toward quiet contemplation more than anything else.

Yesterday I stood on the steep rocky bank of the Dnieper, fascinated by the dark pine woods which seemed to guard some mysterious secret I longed to know. Alas, I could not cross the river because I did not know where to find the ferry. And yet the little forest which called me can be reached only after you cross the water, because it is on an islet formed by arms of the Dnieper. Oh, that old Dnieper keeps this dear land tightly in her arms! My curiosity is aroused because I know that piece of land. There, for one hundred and thirty years, lived farmers who had come from the European West. But they are considered as being of German origin; that was sufficient reason during the war to expatriate these most loyal Russian citizens. They say that about fifteen families are still on that island making their living as lease holders of their own possessions. The first outbreak of the revolution had saved them from being sent to the polar regions of Siberia, as the Tzar-government had intended to do. But why that? Did they have any connections with the devilish politics of the Kaiser? That is precisely what they were accused of, these simple-minded farmers. It is so ridiculous.

But now—I must keep calm. As I said, I need rest very badly. Ah! probably I have mingled already too much in the large affairs of our times. And yet, must we not take part in rearranging our state and should we not do it consciously? Such a war as we have passed through must upset all conditions existing hitherto. The war has transformed thinking and revolutionized feeling. Our world has been upset.

We do not really know how to re-establish ourselves. There are many remedies under proposal. The Bolsheviks are asking us to accommodate ourselves to their regime. But, as time goes on, there also appear various generals demanding surrender to their commands as the only solution. And so it goes, one regime following another. Which is the best, which is meant for the future?

After the Tzaristic regime we had the Kerensky Government. Then followed the nationalistic Ukrainian Rada-administration which again was overthrown by the occupation Army in favor of an autocratic Hetman rule. As soon however, as the Germans had left our territory, that government also disappeared like snow under the spring sunshine. For a time the Ukrainian Petlura claimed the rule until the Bolsheviks, a second time, seized upon the power. After them Greeks and Frenchmen began to occupy the territory. Bands of all kinds of political creeds took possession of places here and there, just as they liked. Then again some "Red regiments" entered our settlements down here in the South. After a while they too had to leave and new rulers with new promises succeeded them.

Each time the population had to submit to new conditions and had to adapt itself to them. Every new regime insults and derides the preceding one and demands its persecution. Little wonder, that no one is any longer respected, for who knows how soon the very latest rulers will be driven away, and they too, then, will be looked upon as rascals, just as their predecessors were.

Thus our situation is comparable to a revolving stage which, as indeed it seems, can be stopped no more. One drama after another is being enacted before the eyes of Europe. We here happen to be on the stage and must act. A turn of the stage, an actor appears, making a grand announcement; the spectators of the West look curiously to see how we are going to put in practice those high-sounding principles. We do not know how we are going to do it either. We are scattered all over the stage, and I rather guess it is a poor show.

If we were allowed to sit aside and look at the variegated play, we could after a while go home and take the rest we need. But alas! we belong to the acting staff and the moving stage, as we said, does not stop revolving. We are going to play, on and on. . . . It is like that well-known fairy tale where some bewitched dancers have to dance unable to stop even for a moment.

I tried to leave the stage, but I am realizing now that it is impossible. To leave the stage means to leave Russia. Who knows how to get out of the crucible?

Or should I perhaps not ask for such a relief? What if the play we are playing now rightly should have the title: "OUR DESTINY"? If that were true, what right do I have to escape my destiny? Possibly one of the thousands of roles was just left over for me to play? What little we know about such things. Well, then, where is the stage manager?—No answer? So it is: nobody knows.

Everything is so strange while we are facing this fate. Perhaps—it just occurs to my mind—perhaps in looking out for a place to rest I was acting according to my part. Indeed, did I really want to find leisure? Did I not rather want to do something constructive in coming to this place? Yes, surely, I came to join in the work of training teachers. I am glad to have this work. More than anything else we need trained men and women to guide our people lost and crying in the wilderness. Even these peaceful Mennonite settlers who up till now remained apart from all history-making events, even they are stirred up by this general upheaval. Now they do not enjoy the peace which dominated their steppes for so long a time. They cannot live any longer in seclusion from the world as they did before.

We must teach them to answer life in the affirmative, to find new ways of living. This universal need at last teaches everyone to feel the beating heart of life, to feel the unity of the world.

Khortiza, September 20, 1919

I was on the island. The ferry is but half a mile away from our house up there behind the pear tree. A breach in the high rock bank makes an anchoring place for the ferryboat.

It was noiselessly quiet all around as the silent boatman rowed me over. I felt in the same mood as when looking on Boecklin's "The Island of Death."

I got off on the bank of the island and plodded heavily through the deep sand, directing myself toward the pine woods. I then left the main road and found solid ground. At once I stood before old fortifications—the ramparts. That recalled to my mind the ancient school story of the Sietsh of those Saparogs who, two hundred years ago, had found their gathering place just here. That is why the island always was considered a historical spot. Gogol has in later times dipped the memory of that Sietsh in the rose-coloured light of poetry. Since that time the Saporogs have figured in the description of the Sietsh as national heroes. The historian, however, knows that those heroes looked very much like the hard leaders of our days.

Is there not already now a legendary tale being woven about Makhno, as about Taras Bulba, the Saporog?—

It was a hot fall day yesterday, and the pines produced a strong resinous exhalation which so salutarily worked on my senses that it was not without effort and appeal to my will-power that I finally left the woods. That is the mysterious lure of the woods. And today again I feel the enticing call. It is delicious to rest on dry ground beneath the trees. I feel restored by nature. The treeless steppe is tiring, but here in the midst of the steppe I find woods, streams, and rocky banks. And then I am free to bathe in the clear water of the Dnieper. All that makes one feel in harmony with nature.

Such experience heals the sorrow and pain which my suffering with our times brings upon me. That also gives me joy in my work. When I, in such a mood, stand opening soul and mind before my students, then the hearts of my young listeners fly toward me like doves to which one strews golden grains. Then I am becoming humble and confine my work solely to a small circle.

I do not know the extent of the greatness the Russian Revolution will reach. We are in a wilderness and are unable to organize the world from this place, though we surmise that humanity must necessarily be a unit. That is how it should be.

Around us is peace. But who knows whether it is the stillness before a new storm or the beginning of a permanent development? I do not wish to prophesy, but I cannot help meditating upon the conditions around us. I feel that the Horoscope must indicate vibrations for the near future and that, no doubt, means that we are going into grave and weighty events.

Most of the colonists cheer the rule of General Denikin, but they overlook the growing displeasure of Russian peasants. Yet, Denikin is less dependent on these colonists than on the attitude of the Russian village inhabitants.

How I should like not to care about all those happenings! I would just do my everyday duty. But such turning away reminds me of the ostrich which, while in danger, hides his head in the sand.

Only, one sees that all is going the wrong way. Apparently nobody is able to change it in the least. It is in vain, just now, to preach common sense in our country. First, there must come presence of mind. People are drunk with that precious thing called liberty. They now endanger that freedom they deserved so much, after having been so long deprived of it. How it grieves those who spent their lives in helping to bring about freedom for their beloved people who see them misled and robbed of that costly, heavenly gift. Indeed, not too early they got it but too late. Now it will do much harm until they regain their equilibrium.

Khortiza, September 21, 1919

They are here!

Who they are and for what political watchword they fight—nobody knows. All that we see is brutal madness, is robbery, killing: one colonist—I heard his name was Dyck—I saw lying dead by the side of the brook. . . .

I hear them coming in. . .

Evening. I bring forth again my crumpled little note sheets. How strange it looks in my room! The doors of the cupboards are open, the drawers of my desk lie on the floor. The contents are scattered around; everything valuable was taken away. The same throughout the house. We have hardly any interest in putting things in order again.

We all are very excited. My friend, in whose house I live, forces himself to be calm. His wife does the same, although she worries very much at having lost most of her husband's clothing; she knows it cannot be replaced. But more valuable things are endangered. We feel and know well enough that to these men our lives seem to be of no more value than the life of a hare is to a Sunday hunter. They will not spare us. Who cares when we lose our lives. . .

The eldest daughter of my friend, gifted with rich fancy, evidently takes delight in the adventure, in spite of all the danger. Her fourteen years perhaps account for this.

The little eight year old girl is of a more serious nature, thanks to her many sicknesses. Often she looks into the faces of her parents with her deep blue eyes; she studies their expression and apparently doubts somewhat whether she is wholly safe with father and mother. Sensitively she notices the vibration of the spiritual atmosphere in the house; her fingers nervously play with the ends of her long, thick blond braids.

Grandmother obviously does not yet realize the meaning of our situation. She is angry about this impudent visit. She, always fond of order in the house, must endure to have her chest of drawers searched through where every little box had its destined place. She must look on when these intruders rummage in the drawers under the pretext of searching for hidden arms. "Stop," she interrupts them, "I will myself open for you all the boxes and show you everything there is in them." She cannot bear it any longer to see everything disorderly.

She is old, and her eyes are obscured. She cannot discern the wild expressions in the faces of the soldiers. Otherwise she would not have dared to cry out. Moreover, she does not fully comprehend the content of their threats since she knows but little Russian. She generally speaks a Dutch dialect. So she interferes, trying to prevent further digging by their unauthorized hands.

Oh, how such intervention irritates these bold robbers! One of them grasps his knout and is just about to strike the old woman. But the daughter and son-in-law ask pity for their mother and at the same time beg of her to let the inevitable go its way. But she replies resolutely, "He wouldn't dare to beat me!" And again she nervously follows that rooting among the dear little things which she had gathered through so many years with great fondness. They show no reverence for them; some things they put into their pockets, others they throw out with disdain and smash them on the floor.

She tries to stop them again. This is too much for them! "Step back, old witch!" one of the bandits cries and at the same time he swings the rifle from his shoulder. He aims at her. At this moment my friend steps forward and instinctively the murderer turns to him. Maybe he thought the son was going to menace him. He entreats them for his mother-in-law. With a curse on his lips the wild man knocks the aged woman down with the rifle; she falls backward and seems to be unconscious. . .

Sometimes in serene weather a swarm of locusts comes down upon a grain field, and in a few hours the whole crop is annihilated. Likewise we were overtaken in the midst of a presumptive peace.

I can hardly account for what has happened today. The event is so overwhelming that the day seems endless. How far away everything that happened in the morning seems to be!

Has it really been today that my friend showed me the loveliness and grandeur of the steppe and the sunrise! We were inspired by it. And was it also today that I stood before my students in the Normal School reciting lyric poems with a mind serene and happy? Yes, it was today! This afternoon I went to see the old oak of which I had been told,—its size made it a landmark, for miles around.

It was there that we heard the first cannon shot. After the second detonation we became suspicious, and after the third we started for our home. We had strange forebodings.

On the first cross-roads we meet horsemen and cabs with three-horse-teams. All are driving toward our village at great speed. We cannot see the end of that serpent-like line because a thick cloud of dust covers the rest and makes the whole procession appear still more mysterious.

Soon after this two horsemen detach themselves from their group and dash at us. We remain motionless, we are horrified. The two horses close before us. They are held in a brutal manner. The men on their backs take the bridles very short so that the poor animals have to open their mouths and show their swollen tongues. Each man has, in spite of the warm day, a big long-haired cap on his head which sits ferociously on one side while on the other side long threatening curls are waving. Thus the dusty face appears dangerous and daring. The eyes bear witness of wild unrestraint. The bright-colored clothes deepen the effect of the savage expression of their faces. All kinds of arms make their appearance still more menacing; over the shoulder hangs the rifle, on the left flank dangles the sabre, behind the belt there are some pistols. While the left hand holds the bridle the right swings a three stripe knot whip. It whizzes down, while they are interrogating us, on the ribs and flanks of the animals. They groan in their pain; the horsemen, upon hearing that, seem to be provoked to cursings such as can be heard in Russia only. We have great difficulty in persuading them of the fact that we are teachers. It seems, however, that to be a teacher is not the greatest social crime. The colonist farmers, in their opinion, are much more guilty.

They rush away, not without threatening. We too try to find our way by hidden paths through orchards and across fences, and at last we reach our home.

The whole village is stirred up. There is about us in the atmosphere an anxiety and an alarming, threatening doom. One neighbor runs to the other telling him how much he had to suffer, believing that he surely had been treated worst.

Our house, indeed, has been troubled less than others which stand right in the main street. Ours is somewhat hidden. But how long will we be unmolested by visiting robbers? The village becomes more and more overrun by these herds. The yards are filled with wagons and horsemen. They take possession of whatever they find and of whatever they like.

Will they stay long? I see some are leaving. There is a long line on the road moving toward the village which is situated right on the bank of the Dnieper. I see that they intend to go over the bridge. There are no bridges at all down stream, and upstream only one at a distance of about a hundred miles.

—Ah! now I hear voices at our door. My friend speaks to the men. They curse angrily. He cannot resist their rough force. Hard and brutal men! By no reason approachable! They now are coming toward my door. Away with these leaves of my diary . . .!

Khortiza, September 23, 1919

Here I am, back at our house. I am pretty certain that it is less turbulent up here than it is in the streets where the stream of men-at-arms is passing by all the time without interruption.

And I am still alive. I hardly believe it myself—that it has been possible to escape.

I am writing in the dark. Light would betray us. There is a temporary pause just now between the soldiers' visits—there are pauses sometimes of half an hour until the invasions are repeated. I must utilize this time. I have to write down my heart-ache, even if it should be rather impossible to decipher it later. I like to imagine that I am telling my story to a friend who does not live through all this and whose soul is at liberty to take a portion of that heavy burden which lies almost unbearably upon me. Maybe the weight of these experiences crushes me more than it would others. I have to get rid of this burden by writing it down.

Where was I? Is it a dream that lies so heavily upon my soul? I remember well how everything came about: the daughters of one of my colleagues came asking me to stay with them at their house. The father had fled, fearing that they would attack him first of all because he was prominent in the community. He was out, and the family did not know where he was and what might have happened to him. Possibly he had fallen into the intruders' hands.

There could not be any hesitation on my part. I went with them. The way was long. I found the conditions of this family deplorable. Their misfortune was the possession of a house more beautiful than those of the neighbors. It was, indeed, a modern two-story cottage in the style of a European suburb mansion. It attracted most of the bandits, who passed through the village by the thousands. Whole troops there were, going in and out. It was a pitiful situation for a woman alone with her three daughters, and a son of about fifteen years of age.

I am going through the rooms which a few days ago seemed to me so hospitable and habitable. The linen-press and the wardrobes are empty. The drawers of the chests are pulled out. On the floor lie the feathers poured out of the coverlets. Every draft makes them fly up and settle down on hair and clothes. A scene of mad ravages.

One time it seemed as if the last one would leave the house. We stood close together and involuntarily we joined hands. It was strengthening our courage.

But at this moment harsh calls from the yard enter the house. "Where is the house owner?"—I advance toward them. They are horsemen wanting lodging for the night. Soon afterwards the yard is filled with horsemen and carriages. There is a calling and swearing, a breaking of fences, a rattling of arms. Our nerves quiver. The family surrounds me, not knowing what to do. The daughters cling to my neck. "Help us! They come! We are done for." That is what their lips mutter. It is from me that they want help, and for that very reason I am able to do more than I ever had expected that I could do. The thought that I must bring help, that I must find a way out of the situation, saves me from the feeling of helplessness. I believe now in myself and my ability. I master my excitement. I try to comfort them, without knowing however, how there can be any help. Resistance evidently would be as useless as Don Quixote's fighting with the windmills.

A man can endure much more than in normal times he believed possible.

There the intruders come in again, pouring in. They are noisy and swear. "Oh to be sure!" are their triumphant outbursts, "Here we are in the house of a rich man! Where is he?"

Forcing myself to be calm, I declare, "Here lives a teacher, a man in the service of the people. He had to depart for the city on business of the school and he has not yet been able to return. I myself am sharing the house with them."

"Tell us stories!" they cry. But their instinct drives them forward to find something to rob. Questioning would mean to lose precious time. There might come others before us, they think. So they scatter through the rooms.

"There's a piano," somebody exclaims. "Who plays? Come on, you girls, play for us." The second daughter goes forward, she seems as courageous as anybody can be. I remember her now, a heroine, she braves their shamelessness and sits down before the piano. She opens the music and plays—it is an aria of Bach. Imagine the contrast,—that lovely girl playing Bach, and, sprawled around in arm-chairs, the wild robbers with faces of savages covered with dust, looking like animals. They lean back in the chairs, stretching out their legs, crossing their arms like Napoleons. Thus they pose for a short time. Then they jump up with the so-called threefold curse, an indecent assault on the mother of God. They want a lively dance-music, a polka-mazurka! She pretends not to know dance music at all. She leaves the piano in dreadful confusion, for the sounds of music had stirred up the profoundest depths of the soul, and now threaten to loosen the tension which upholds us. But that would mean desperation.

All the rooms are full of the same kind of men. The lust for precious things possesses them without exception, and each of them wants to come before the other.

Now the daylight is gone. They demand light.

They get an oil lamp. There is a group at the sideboard, where they search for glassware in order to shatter it to pieces on the floor. An object which looks like silver disappears in a pocket or behind the shirt front. Some others search in the bookcase. They take pleasure in tearing the covers from the leaves and in tramping upon them. Some one hammers on the sewing machine. Still others are occupied in cutting out the cloth which covers the sofa stuffing. Again and again they rummage the closets, chests of drawers, and the bedding.

There is an awful tumult in the store-room and in the cellar. It is fall, and many fruits and vegetables have been canned for the winter. They taste of everything, and all that they cannot eat at once they cast out through the windows.

As we look on we hope that they may not find the one or the other jar. There are some dark corners which always come to mind in these troubleous times, and there are hidden a few more or less valuable things. But there is no hope that a stone would be left unturned. At last we are not much concerned about those things any more. Our life is at stake. At such moments possessions become worthless. We know, besides, well enough, that we cannot save anything by protest.

The darkness of the night gives still more weight to the oppression of our souls. It is terrible and dismal at the same time. We turn away from the work of destruction in the house and enter the open porch before the house. No relief. There is a crying, calling, shooting, lamenting. Even the poor beasts become restless. Cows bellow, pigs grunt. Nobody has thought, in all this universal distress, to feed them. We forget about our own meals also. Would the dark night but be over at last! we sigh.

But now there come two horsemen at full gallop into the yard. Sinister fellows. One of them comes down and approaches me in a way as if he wants my head. He searches through my pockets, takes knife, watch, matches, and by all means tries to find out who I am. He sees that I am not the head of this family and demands the house-owner. We tell him he is not here yet. From the eyes of the inquisitor sparks of wrath flash. He guesses the man and his sons must be in the army of the General, their enemy. I shall pay for it. He demands that I name all men serving as volunteers in the troops of

General Denikin. Even if I had wanted to satisfy him it was impossible to do so, since I had been at this place only a few weeks. I show documents of my home-place, a hundred versts toward the west from here. He believes they are forged and all that I say is subterfuge. They threaten to send me into the headquarters of Dukhonin. I understand what this cynical expression means. Dukhonin was a general in the war-army. He was hated very much by all soldiers. When revolution came they at once put him to death. Since then there was that saying of sending somebody to the headquarters of Dukhonin. It means death. They repeat the threats. I cannot name any person. At last they say, "Well then, we bring you to father Makhno. He will find out pretty soon what secrets you hide."

At the name of Makhno we shudder. Now we know who is conducting these hordes. Makhno himself! Sometime ago he was an ally of the Bolsheviks. He then stood at this place fighting against enemies of the Bolsheviks. His people were known as especially cruel. He felt that the Bolsheviks were too tame, too humane, so he separated from them and fought against the Bolsheviks as well as against the volunteers of the White Army.

Since then he established a refuge for all criminal elements of the Ukraine. Makhno; who does not know that name! He surely has secured a place in the memory of people for generations to come. To all honest folk, he will be a terrible symbol of evil for years and years.

The time of war and revolution has led thousands of men astray and started them on the road of crime and robbery. They all hold with him as their chief. He professes to wipe out all capitalists by sword. He agrees with the Bolsheviks in condemning capitalism but finds that they spare human life —on principle—and so they are in his views too tame. His road is literally sprinkled with blood.

That is the man before whom they want to bring me. But before this plan is realized a group of about seven men enters. They again show much anger since there is nothing left to rob. Suddenly I notice that these dissolute fellows want to separate me from the women. The daughters are very nice-looking, indeed. They make all kinds of threats with their arms. They even offer me an opportunity to

escape. But could I leave these ladies since their honor stood at stake? Had they not chosen me to protect them?

I made a decision within myself not to withdraw from my responsibility even at the cost of life. I again force myself to be calm and rely upon the same means which saved me a year ago when I was condemned to be shot. I experienced at that time that with highest spiritual effort I was able to disarm the malefactors.

This time I consciously take the offensive and deliver an attack with weapons of mental concentration. Suggestively I force upon them the thought: 'you shall not kill me!' I concentrate on the idea that it is impossible to kill me. The man who many times aimed at me with a pistol now seems to be less determined. That renders me steadfast. I realize now distinctly that the murderous lust gives way to more humane feelings. Already one, leaning upon his rifle, makes known his decision in favor of my life by saying, "Well, let's go!" The others seem to agree, except one. He has a stronger will and unconsciously fights my suggestion by a new agressive effort. He cocks his pistol, fixing me constantly with his eyes. I do not say a word, but I increase the tension of the thought more and more: 'you shall not!'

At last the other men talk to him.

He does not become friendly yet, but his hand drops down and he leaves the house with the others.

He wanted to come again at four in the morning. I promised to stay here. And I kept my word. But he did not come. The night, however, was dreadful. No sleep came to our eyes, although we all had lived two days and one night in continuous agitation and scarcely had eaten anything. We, indeed, had forgotten to eat.

After the last bandits had left the house, there was a quarter of an hour without any newcomers. We were astonished. We felt somewhat relieved. We crept all together into the little room just beside the kitchen and established ourselves, lying or sitting, for a rest, always listening to sounds outdoors. It was midnight now, and silence around us. That in itself was strange enough. The excited girls always heard walking or knocking. No wonder, after all they had endured. But there was no danger now.

The robbers had gone to rest. Now they do not need to do their work in the dark. That is the change of conditions.

Toward morning we feel cool. The nerve-tension gives way. We shudder and feel terribly exhausted.

Now it is day. And nobody comes? We cannot understand the calmness. We expected storm.

At eight o'clock the first groups appear. They want something to eat. We show them that there has not been anything left by their fellows. Instead of having pity on us they curse in anger and wrath.

The little kitchen clock strikes ten o'clock. The only thing continuing its course, as days and years before.

Shrill whistles sound through the street. We rush to the window. Preparation for departure? If it were! The horsemen gather in groups. The wagons are there. It looks strange what we see. The carriages are full of stolen things. The men wear clothes which the day before hung in the wardrobes of the inhabitants of this village. Large, bright-colored tablecloths lie under the saddles. On both sides of the saddles hang puffed feather-beddings.

Some men here and there seem to be looking for a further chance to plunder and ride at full speed into the yards calling for the owner in order to get a golden wedding ring or a watch if possible. I saw one on horseback reaching into his pocket and laughingly show to another a handful of jewels.

One single face has left a sympathetic imprint on my memory. It was in the morning that a young, intelligent looking man approached our door. He seemed to be embarrassed. He asked for bread. He did not demand as the others always did. That was very strange to us. I looked into his face. He was no villain. Recognizing that, I did not hesitate to ask who they were. He became ashamed. "We are Makhno-people," he said. "I am really ashamed to be among them."

He confessed upon questioning that necessity had forced him to join them:—either join them or be shot. To save his life he had made this decision. Never had he thought of becoming an Anarchist.

Well, how many so-called good people would stand the test in a similar case! Are we not largely the product of circumstances? This man, I do not doubt it, would be a very respectable man in conditions of Western Europe. He was a weak character.

I know many who remain good as long as the social order remains intact, but they would weaken as soon as that order would give way to anarchy.

After we had seen the looters leave, we gathered together, wondering what the new day was to bring us. Our looks were directed toward the highway leading from the west into our valley. That was the road on which our tormentors had come the day before. We had been robbed. We hoped that all danger was past. My charges uttered a sigh of relief. We greeted the bright Sunday like new-born people. Of course, we still felt the horror in our bones. In the streets there still were to be heard, now and then, cries, whistles, and shots. Those were the last belated ones to leave. That is what we thought.

During about half an hour we felt ourselves again.

Suddenly a voice beside our window. It is the neighbor who calls: "They are coming again!—Last night there were five killed," he adds in a lowered voice. Then he disappears again.

"Five killed?" we repeat one to another. Like a black monster winding down the road men march into the valley. With growing dismay we observe it for a long time—perhaps it only seemed long—our eyes fixed on that serpent-like stream of men in wagons and on horses. Will it never end? For hours horsemen and carriages are uninterruptedly pouring down. The measure of our sufferings is not yet full: this is the only possible conclusion.

Soon, as we look, all streets, all yards, and all houses are once more filled with these fellows.

Our house is crowded again. They are eager for plunder. But this time they cannot be satisfied, and not finding anything enrages them—we have to suffer for it. Our situation is much more precarious than it was the day before.—

At about eleven o'clock there entered three men whose looks seemed especially sinister to us. The absence of the landlord and the prosperous appearance of the house increased their rage. But strangely enough they did not curse and swear as badly as others before had done. It seems that their cursing and swearing was an outlet for their inner emotions; these sullen silent fellows are the dangerous ones.

They burst out just once or twice saying, "Here's a nest to hatch bourgeois," or, "That's what they call poor!"

Now they saw the fifteen year old boy. Curtly one of them ordered him to enter the next room with him. The sister noticed the small dagger he was getting ready· and realizing the danger for her brother, stepped forward to protect him. The murderer raised his arm and was not going to spare her either. Now I realized the situation as most dangerous, and I started to speak to him. I succeeded, but with great effort, to restrain him from murder. I used the same means as the day before:—suggestion. I opposed my will to his will and thus disarmed him.

To look upon them as they left was like looking upon fleeing devils. It had been their second call, and they threatened to come back again. I could not see myself able to give further protection. The mental tension had been so strong that I felt I could not rise from the exhaustion again to the same strength as before.

The boy, faced by the immediate danger of losing his life, was trembling with fear and we hardly could quiet him.

We considered how to escape. The house was to be abandoned. There was, indeed, no use of staying. We could not save anything, so we decided to flee under cover of orchards. Each one raked together, in a hurry, a few things, and then we stole away from the house.

We had scarcely reached the first group of trees when we saw the same men coming back again. We were afraid of being seen; we felt chased by death. Hardly breathing we remained long minutes hidden behind trees or bushes until we assured ourselves that the armed men we had seen had disappeared in another yard.

At one time, however, we heard very distinctly a noise right beside us. With the blood almost frozen in our veins we stopped, looking at each other. Recalling this situation it seems to me I saw the eyes of the girls bidding farewell to this world. In anxious suspense the minute grew into eternity. So relative is our comprehension of time-measure. We have but a relative conception of the absolute.

Instead of a shot or a triumphant cry, we heard at once a low voice speaking in Dutch which we all understood, "Are you leaving too?" My charges recognized the voice. It was their neighbor.

"I have already been three hours at this hiding place," he went on to tell us. "The people who spent the night at our home, to whom we gave to eat of the best we had, who slept in our beds, tried to kill me this morning. The shot failed. I fled to the orchard. Now I am hiding here, but I am troubled by the thought of what has become of my family. Did you see my wife and my children?" he asked anxiously.

Nobody had seen them.

"My boots," he said, pointing to his naked feet, "I had to take off and give to them. After that they wanted my gold, supposedly hidden in the ground. That is their idea: we colonists have gold as well as money and clothing—everything in unheard of quantities," he added bitterly.

In trying to come toward us he groaned. They had flayed his back with knouts to make him confess where he had hidden things. I turned away not to show my emotion. What do they intend to do with us? Is there any escape? I do not see any. We are to perish!

Like thieves we must steal away. For a long time we hide in a threshing place behind a straw heap until at last for a moment the yard is emptied. The mansion cuts off the view of the street. At last we enter it. There we find a widow with two almost grown-up children. Now I recognize the girl. She is my student in Normal School. I could not recognize her at first, she had changed so. In these young eyes there is a nameless sorrow. Pale and disturbed the others look, too. The imprint of their sufferings never will be erased from these faces, even when they become old. But it seems we are all predestined to an early death.

We started out, hoping finally to reach the Normal School. Just close to it lived a near relative of my exiled family. We had to cross the street somewhere. But that was the domain of the Anarchists; yet we must dare it. And we did. Nobody spoke to us. We surely did not represent bourgeois capitalists in these clothes torn from barbed wire fences.

We enter the school building. We are in safety, for the savages are not attracted by empty schools, especially when they lie far off.

My charges decide to stay in a basement room where there is a small window with a non-transparent windowpane. There are two or three narrow benches. There they can rest. And nothing is left for me to do for them, except from time to time to look after them whenever it might be possible to steal away from my home and reach the school. I shall try to encourage them, somehow.—

I hear the sound of the midnight bell. For two hours we are left alone. But as long as they remain in town there is no guarantee of not being molested at night-time. I shall try, however, to rest a little, although none of us dares to undress.

Khortiza, September 24, 1919

No man could have possibly thought yesterday that it was Sunday. There was nothing to make us realize what day it was.

For three days these Anarchists have been passing through our place. Many thousands went by, and everyone robbed. No horse has been left to the farmers. And yet this is the time of sowing winter wheat. But strange to say, nobody cares to do things like that. As long as these Makhno-bandits stay with us our only concern is how to remain alive.

Most of the people have become so compliant that on the very first demand, without any resistance, they take off their last boots and quietly remain barefooted. Far more serious is the fact that the farmers have to look on as they carry away the wheat, feed, and the last flour to their horses which these men have stolen from other farmers.

It is worse for those families whose sons serve in the so-called volunteer-army of General Denikin. In those cases there is no pardon. I saw it yesterday when they burned down a big farm just because the son was in this army. It was a fine farm. The dwelling house was new. The barns were filled with grain and hay up to the roof. And what modern implements and machinery the farmer had!

There were armed men at the doorway keeping away everybody who intended to save the least things.

This was not the only house which was destroyed by fire. Last night the beautiful house of the factory owner was burned down. But that destruction of property is not the worst. Men are slain, women are ravished.

There are rumours circulating about that the number of adherents of Makhno is growing like an avalanche. There are a hundred thousand men, they say. Surely these poorly organized Anarchists do not know themselves how many they are. But we are sure that there are many thousands of them, because for three days they have continually passed through our village and crossed the Dnieper bridge. For three days and nights we did not take off our clothes. And we did not rest either. No wonder then that we are nearly dead from fatigue. And yet, as soon as a dog barks, we sit up and listen to approaching steps.

Last night they were four times in our house. My friend and his wife with whom I live are quite skillful in dealing with them. Twice they succeeded in buying themselves off by a pair of trousers. But twice there was no escape from them.

These invasions at daytime are surely awful enough, but they cannot be compared with the horror of a surprise at night. We had no oil to light the lamps, and imagine how they groped about through all rooms, making a row and swearing. They lighted matches and threw them everywhere, into the bedding, into cupboards, on the floor. We were following them to prevent a fire.

How hard it is for the parents to keep up before their children! By and by, however, the children realize that their dear ones are as powerless as they are themselves. The little girl of eight years stood between us looking at the window and listening. I felt her little heart beating while we were anxiously trying to see what was happening outdoors.

"There, father!" she cries and clings convulsively to him. Indeed, there a man passes. We pause breathlessly—and there he knocks at the door. Although we had expected it, we nevertheless are so terrified that we at first do not dare to go near the door. But, as soon as the strokes gain in number and vigor, we hurry to open in order not to increase the wrath of the intruders.

Marguerite, my friend's wife, had been cooking the whole day yesterday for the uninvited guests. The bread was gone. So she had to knead and to bake anew. There is nobody who likes to be refused bread. As soon as there are three or four men in the house, the first thing they do is to order a meal, even when they had their dinner in a neighbor's house half an hour ago. They are as voracious as locusts.

Mrs. U., living close to the main street, has just now fifty men billeted in her house and she has to feed them all. Besides this she must bake two hundred pounds of bread daily.

Marguerite has a brother at our place. His family had to flee because of their son being a "volunteer." We do not know where this family is hiding now. There is no safe shelter around our settlement because they are aiming at all villages of these Western colonists. The house is exposed to their depredations; it looks like a bee-hive, with this one difference, however, that nothing is being brought in but everything taken out. Here is one who drags a bundle of clothing away, and there another one casts out the chairs through the window onto the street. A third leads the cow away. The fat hogs were butchered yesterday. When Marguerite heard of it she was bold enough to mingle with them and to save some of the meat. In order to do that she had disguised herself with the poorest clothes she could find and forced herself through the crowds at the meat table. "Now let me have a good piece," she called, "I suppose that's for poor people." Saying that she pushed a leg into her sack. Then after this she instructed a boy of about fifteen how to conduct himself in a manner appropriate to the situation, and sent him over more than once to bring back to our cellar as much meat as he could carry. Fortunately the boy was a Russian. He was a good-hearted little fellow. He himself got interested in the adventure and tried on his own account to penetrate into the house to save a few other things of those fugitive people. It was difficult to hide the secured food from the spying eyes of the robbers. The boy made them think he was carrying a sack of chaff and put it into the cow stable. Later we tried to find a better hiding place for these things.

I put away some of my valuable possessions under the rafters of the roof. Woe, should they find them! When they discover hidden goods they behave as if we had committed a crime, and as a result they become more pitiless.

My friend and I are seriously concerned about the future of our settlement. They have a design upon us. People who do not know anything about world affairs and world politics are hoping for some outside power to rescue us. Some even believe the German armies will come back to occupy the Ukrainian territory. They do not want me to destroy their illusions. But what is the use to erect a building on sand? For that is what this hope amounts to. Germany has been conquered, and although we do not know what peace covenant has been made with her, it is wholly unthinkable that the allies will let her have the rich Ukraine.

Khortiza, September 27, 1919

This was the first day that no Anarchist passed through our place. Frightened and shy people come out of their houses and gather in little groups. Everyone wants to unbosom himself, to unburden his mind. Alas! what a sight these farm villages present, usually so clean and orderly. Even the housewives who, being Dutch, would never allow any disorder whatsoever in the home, even they rest their hands in their laps, tired from the labor of past days. Think of what they have gone through in these days! Day and night they have waited on those brutal-minded fellows.

Strangely enough, one can hardly feel joyful at their departure. There is not enough strength left to be happy. The heads of the families are thinking of the future. The fall planting has not yet been done, and the horse stables are empty. Corpses lie around in the streets and on the roads where the Makhno bands passed on their mad rides.

Is this all there is left? What will become of us? These are the questions agitating every mind, and no solution is evident.

The Anarchists despoiled these people because of their alleged sympathy for Denikin. It is, indeed, true that these colonists, though always professing neutrality, are really not neutral. There is a difference between their feeling and that of the Russian peasants. While the peasantry revolted against the re-establishment of the old regime, the colonists remained loyal to it. They even let themselves be enlisted by Denikin's officers. They were betrayed into it, of course. There would be a conscription anyhow, they were told and assured they would be organized for self-defense only in their own region. What do these farmers know about politics? Some young colonists had become distinctly opposed to the Russian people in general and hoped for some revenge for all the sufferings they had endured under the Tzar and also later. They had, up to this time, done no harm to anybody. To be exact, however, it is true that they had denounced a few of the revolutionist leaders to the German army of occupation. It was foolish of them to think of revenge.

The Ukrainian peasantry hails this much-praised freedom as anarchy; these simple-minded people think of freedom as license. Since the Bolsheviks also try to bring order into the chaos which followed the October revolution, by establishing a dictatorship, the Ukrainian peasants oppose the Bolsheviks also. Especially is this the case since the peasants did not wish for communism except as concerns the distribution of the land. Makhno has promised them all the license they want, and so they stick to him. Think how little trouble it is for them to get clothes and possessions, no work—nothing to do but rob peaceful people with their armed bands!

What future are we going to meet?

Khortiza, October 1, 1919

We are told Makhno has gone over the Dnieper bridge and has proceeded toward Berdyansk on the Azov sea. If that is true, he will surely not avoid the hundred Dutch or German villages in the rich Molotchnaya region. Thus, these too, will be exposed to unrestrained license.

Here anarchy is growing, although the Makhno Anarchists have disappeared. In the neighboring Ukrainian villages smaller or larger bands have started acting after the example of their predecessors. They demand tribute which we are not able to pay, and so they have recourse to inquisition and execution. They do not understand that there is nothing here to take. The mill and factory owners have fled. They knew they were considered candidates for death. "These hyenas" of the abandoned battlefields are almost more terrible than the Makhno Anarchists. They take hostages and torture them.

Today I met one of my girl-students. I had been told of the tragic end of her father. With silent nods she confirmed what I had heard. He was a prominent citizen, to whom this settlement owes many valuable improvements. They had taken him as hostage, and now his body lies on the other side of the Dnieper. His sons tried to bring over the body; they were chased away with insults. Verily, a Sophoclean tragedy!

Yesterday a clerk of the Saving company was with us. He showed us his flayed back and legs. Horrible! One becomes enraged at seeing such marks of barbarism.

But, alas, we are powerless and exposed to all licentiousness. The least resistance would make our situation worse. Very few of us are able to avert threatened violence: sometimes through quietness, sometimes through a word at the right time or through a taming look. Many mourn for members of their family who have been killed, others are wandering away from our place, being without shelter.

On the island the bandits have arranged a real Massacre of St. Bartholomew. Whosoever could not flee had to die. There is not a single colonist in the whole village.

Khortiza, October 3, 1919

We are all irretrievably lost. All streets are filled with men. The stream of the Makhno-Anarchists is flooding back. They are driven back over the bridge on our side. Who drives them? What power? Nobody knows. But the wrath of the repulsed Anarchists is without measure. Again we are held accountable here, in the village of these Dutch farmers.

And what prospects! They do not want to merely go through the village as they did before, they intend to stay here now. All houses are occupied by these fighters. The armed men swarm like bees around the houses.

We stood outside our door looking over the fence upon the yards beneath us. All at once there was a cracking noise behind us. The border fence came down. A horseman forced his animal through the narrow gate and demolished the cornerpoles. Then he took his knout and lashed the poor animal, and pulled the bit bridles as if he would saw through the mouth.

"Hand me your clothes!" he cried wildly.

The attempts of my friend to refuse did not succeed. He persisted in his demand and got the last extra pair of trousers.

At the same time we hear below the crash of broken window panes, the banging of smashed doors, shrill whistles. Horses neigh and groan, cows bellow, furious men ride through orchards breaking down trees and fences; they are calling, insulting, cursing, swearing.

Each house owner becomes enslaved to these severe masters. They hold wild orgies of feasting, with roaring and scornful laughter.

They order, "Host, get feed ready for our horses! Get hay and oats at any cost! It is no excuse that you have not any left!" Thus the colonist is forced to steal. Of course, no one objects when his neighbor takes from him, knowing that he is compelled to do what he does.

The women are cooking and baking for the guests. Cows are being butchered and rich roast meats are served. That is the life our new rulers lead!

Khortiza, October 6, 1919

For four days we have had no chance to undress. No chance at all. No rest. Last night we had to take in nineteen men. At first there were only eight. Steadily their number increased. At midnight the last came in. For each party we were compelled to furnish a meal. The last ones had a wounded man with them. I never heard a man swear like this man who had a lead bullet in his body.—

This morning there was a great excitement for Marguerite. Someone of these uninvited guests had discovered the hundred eggs she had hidden under a bed to be saved for the coming winter. They considered that a crime. They demanded to have the entire lot boiled at once. She objected resolutely. Often she has had success with her presence of mind, but this time she failed in protesting against their demand. She too, had to obey. They are the lords. No question about that.

The noisiest are mostly not the most dangerous ones. There are those who do not use words but act upon the first impulse: they do not hesitate a moment to stab a man. They do not know about any psychological checks which prevent the moral human being from acting irresponsibly. They are real Anarchists, men who do not recognize any compulsion or law.

I could interest myself in studying the psychology of these human beings. But alas, to make such research, one would have to be unconcerned in this matter. My heart is too deeply involved to permit dispassionate study.

Khortiza, October 7, 1919

Yesterday evening our so-called soldiers left our house to meet their enemies. Along the Dnieper a front line has been established. Even these bands, seemingly so loosely constituted, must have some organization for battle. There is a wild crackling and shooting. From the other side, from the city of Alexandrovsk, our village is being bombarded. But it scarcely frightens us. Right near to our house a projectile exploded with a deafening detonation. The splinters reached our porch-door. It is a relief to hope that there will be a displacing of the front line after this.

The pastor has been forced to leave his house. He could not save a thing. He has to hide himself. For a few nights he was with me in my room.

He is hard of hearing and asked me to awaken him in case he would fall asleep. What tragedy! The old man, who has been a true rescuer of souls all his life, is now a poor fugitive without lodging and rest. He is a special mark for their suspicions. He does not know even how bitterly they pursue him. We try to have him spared. But we must prevail upon him to leave the place this very night. It is dark, cold, and dirty outside. I know he will object to it. Shall he leave his congregation and steal away by night like a thief through ravines and valleys? But he cannot be of help to us just now. And they surely will not spare his life if they find him. I hope he can escape unseen.

Khortiza, October 8, 1919

Our minister went away last night. He escaped through the window. He had to make haste as our house was being filled up again with looters. The old man was wading through the mud, which was deep after many days of rain.—

I dared to appear in the street today. I saw none of the inhabitants there. There is busy traffic, however. The Anarchists are moving from one house to the other. Because the streets are deep in mud, the horsemen ride at full speed along the sidewalks, as if each were an orderly. I probably looked more like one of them than like a colonist for I was not molested. Of course, I tried to behave as they did. I looked so freely into their faces that two of them felt they ought to salute. I was clean shaven and was wearing shoes. Such evidence of prosperity is not seen today among the colonists; razors and shoes are always stolen first.—

Our neighbor W. called at our house. I had not seen him for two weeks. I hardly recognized him. His dark brown hair had turned gray in that short time.

Marguerite's cow died yesterday. The Russian boy reported that in the stable of her brother there was a cow left. She conceived a brave idea. She dressed like a beggar's wife and went over with a sack on her shoulder. Then she went right toward the bandit chief and talked to him like this, "Listen, you are fighting for the poor people, isn't that true? Now, I am a poor woman and want to have a cow of my own. Let me have that one here."

"Hey you," he replied, "The cow has to stay with us, but you can come to milk. For doing that you may take some milk along; enough for your children."

Marguerite figured well. She knew that the cow as well as the man the next day might have disappeared to somewhere; so she went, entered the stable and led her off.

As they called her back she firmly and courageously went on, saying at the same time, "I take her home and will milk her there; you will have your milk wherever you stay."

They laughed, "Well, a real devil of a girl." They respected that "impudent theft," as they thought it to be. They surely did not guess that she was saving her brother's own cow.—

Afternoon. I have seen my charges at their hiding place in the cellar of the Normal School. They have not yet been discovered, but we all realize how bad a place it is to stay in. The day after our escape I tried, together with one of the girls, to reach their abandoned home in order to get some of the most needed things; but we did not find anything which would have been of value to them. No blankets, no clothes at all.

Today they told me that their house has been burned. Sorrowful and discouraged they bow their heads. Without shelter whatsoever. The winter is coming. It is cold already. Their father is no more. That is the fate of so many! Who wonders that such unhappy people would rather die than live?

The fight on the Dnieper river is still going on. Those on the other side cannot cross; neither can they on this slope. The Anarchists prepare for staying here. They even use telephones. Our house is a center. Eight men are assigned to serve here. You cannot get any sense out of their talking because they use a special code.

My friend told me that these men had inquired about me. My appearance was strange to them. I am wearing a felt hat, and am clothed in a way foreigners are.

My friend told them that I was a writer.

"Oh, I know, a poet," the commander explained to the others with emphasis.

Since then they meet me with a certain respect. Who would ever have suspected that they would esteem a poet? Curiously enough, these telephone men pretend to be educated, since they are able to read and to write.

They seemingly realize that they cannot impress us by brutal treatment, therefore they make efforts to be considered educated. Perhaps I can make use of such a situation.

Khortiza, October 10, 1919

One could laugh if things were not so tragic. I am expected to write verses about Makhno! That is what our telephone operators want. They did not say so directly to me, but they have asked my friend whether I would be willing to do it. They have the idea that Father Makhno appears a hero to me, as he does to them. Of course, there is some selfish ambition in it; they want to present that piece of poetry to their chief and thus win his special favor.

My friend has tried to dissuade them from that idea by saying that I have only been writing in some western language.

They could not believe that a writer who speaks Russian fluently should not be able to write in the same language.

They have, however, not yet approached me with their request. I act as if I did not know a thing about their wish.

Yesterday I busied myself out-of-doors. It becomes unbearable to read or to write; the inner tension is too great. The thoughts turn about in the mind as if chased. Therefore one looks for manual work. That is as quieting as it is possible under these circumstances. This time I was about to stretch the hide of Marguerite's dead cow over a pole and to wind it up for drying. The commander noticed my labor. And strange to say, he hurried to me, saluted and helped. I was disconcerted. I would not have expected it from these people after all we had seen. We started a peaceful conversation and he was indulgent toward my views and used the pronoun of politeness instead of that of degradation as these men all do. I received the impression that this fellow was no criminal. He told me of his previous life. He is a Cossack. During the war he had repeatedly excelled through bravery. He had been corporal and advanced to sergeant major. But in the course of time he had become aware of the great corruption of the officers and the State functionaries. After the outbreak of the revolution, he had returned home to a community on the Don river. There he had been elected president of the local soviet. He had acted upon the directions given by the central soviet and was, he believed, serving the people. After the Germans had left the Ukraine, an army had been organized under General Denikin. He sent out terrible revenge expeditions over the country. They came to his place and he was arrested, being the president of the soviet. The officers of that expedition condemned him to a punishment of eighty strokes on the naked body with steel rods. Owing to his unusually strong constitution he was able to endure this torture. But he had taken an oath to revenge that treatment. He would—now he became excited—kill every officer he ever could find.

I asked him whether he approved of burning all good and beautiful houses just for the reason that followers of the old regime might have lived in them; whether he did not consider it a foolish destruction of people's property.

"No," he said, "I wouldn't call it good, but," he added, "our people cannot be restrained."

I can understand the psychological attitude of this man although I must, of course, condemn the principles of his actions. Were all Makhno followers like him, one could perhaps turn them to reason and good will. This man listened to my explanations. He saw, however, no possibility of successfully opposing the murderous inclinations of the Anarchists. Perhaps his feeling of revenge had not been satisfied as yet. His awful experience has evidently provoked an unusually strong reaction which he had to suppress. And that suppression explains psychologically why he had found an outlet through actions of revenge.

One can comprehend these things up to a certain point; nevertheless our situation remains wretched; aye, I should say tragic. Oh, so very tragic!

Khortiza, October 11, 1919

Up till now the cow of Marguerite's brother was in our stable, replacing the dead one. Somebody has followed Marguerite or has found out somehow; at any rate it became known that the cow had belonged to people whose son was a volunteer. An Anarchist came to get the cow back. Marguerite appealed to the men quartered in her home. She asked them to help her to keep the cow if they still wanted to drink milk. This appeal was useless however. Should they stand against their own thief comrades? Where the milk came from, they did not care. Of course, they would not give it up. They made it our duty to get it for them.

Thus the strange horseman took the cow away. The woman did not give up, for she has an old mother and two small girls who cannot be without milk. She followed the robber and started to bargain with him. She proposed to buy the cow from him. He demanded ten thousand rubles. She offered one thousand, although she did not possess even that much. After long bargaining, the bandit, who became aware of the fact that he could not proceed very fast with a cow, would give the animal back for three thousand rubles. Now Marguerite ran from house to house to borrow that money. I had hidden mine and had forgotten where I had put it. But soon I remembered that it had been in the garret under the roof somewhere. I went up the stairway in stocking feet in order to be as noiseless as possible and not to arouse suspicion amongst our men. After I had found the hiding-place I ran into the fields where the bandit was leading away the cow. I offered him the money agreed upon. But he now demanded a larger sum. I almost failed to have him believe that the poor wife had no money except this offered. Seeing that he got as much as was possible he left the cow. I brought her home the shortest way.

After some time Marguerite came home, sorrowful, for she did not succeed in getting a sum of three thousand rubles. Everybody had been robbed of the last penny.

How glad she was when I told her that my money had done it.

Now we have a cow, that's true, but the chickens are gone. They were young and were laying in spite of the cold weather. These brave heroes, the Anarchists, have invented the following method of catching chickens: They cut off with their sabres the legs of the poor animals, or wound them somehow; thus they get posssession of this "game" which then is brought before the hostess who has to prepare a meal whenever it may be. In many cases that was in the middle of the night.—

We are moved by all these little things almost more than by the death of men, for the dead are secure, they are safe. Many a one envies them. It is surely true, as long as we live we need food. We see with anxiety that our stores shrink so rapidly that we can see ahead only for a few days more. Soon we shall not be able to satisfy our tormentors. The more acute the question of nourishment becomes the more wild the bandits become and the more unrestrained. One hardly can understand why they have no regard for anything at all. Are they indeed becoming brutes?

They still, seemingly, believe that we hold back some food somewhere. How should we manage that? They control everything everywhere, in the rooms, in the cellar, under the roof. Did they not get, lately, the last remainders of the food in the cellar? "Cook it for us," they ordered. Marguerite is not as afraid as most others are. She replied, "I shall boil it for you but not all at once. Half of it will do for the first time. The rest will be for tomorrow."

"We never think of the next day," they answered back, "therefore, once more, prepare it all for today. That is our order!"—"Order" emphasized.

Self-control you would preach to them in vain. Marguerite is annoyed by such folly. She does not understand how men can eat so much meat. I tried to furnish an explanation. I said, "You know as well as I do, wild animals like to devour meat, the peaceful cows and horses eat grass. Don't you see, they have to have it?"

Marguerite was right. The next day there was no meat. The Anarchists, at this time, did not need it. They over-ate and now they lie and groan. But surely the next day they will demand roast meat again. So it goes. And when the hostess cannot secure any meat they send out someone of their number to get it, who comes back in a short time with half a dozen chickens. Marguerite had to obey their command and prepare them a chicken dinner.

For two weeks we have had this plague in our house. The emotional strain exhausts us; we have no longer energy to hope anew each day. Each morning my friend, his wife, and I talk over our situation. In our opinion they will not be able to stay here very much longer on account of the shortage of food—such as is left. But the Anarchists are calculating differently. They kill off cows which are expected to calve in a few weeks. They send expeditions to all the villages of the colonists and get bread and flour.

Yes, we cannot help realizing that these ravishers will not die of famine as long as there is bread somewhere. We, of course, will have to face hunger very soon. Most of us eat but potatoes. Our physical strength is vanishing. I noticed it today when I had to cut down a few pear trees in our orchard and was chopping them to pieces. I frequently had to stop and rest before I could recover sufficient strength to struggle forward again.

Our only rescue lies in the change of the front line. Each time when the cannon thunder increases, or when the crackling of the rifles grows in intensity, we live in new hope. We do not care which side wins if only the line would be moved in one or the other direction.

Those forces beyond the river possess better artillery, but the stream is too great a hindrance. It is indeed not easy to cross the river. And besides they may figure, no doubt, that Father Makhno is sly and has devoted men. His bands are growing every day. Many are attracted by the prospect of plundering. Whether there are a hundred thousand, as some say, or less, there are too many for us. Every house is filled with them. Significantly, they are mostly peasants. The factory workers are usually organized, they are not Anarchists. They belong in general to the Bolshevik party or to the Socialists.

The peasant Anarchists are anxious to provide themselves with clothes this time. Doubtless the

Ukrainian peasants are just now in great need of clothing. The peasants of Northern Russia are used to a poorer life and can make clothing for themselves. They weave linen and sew their clothes. For the winter they make furs out of sheep hides and shoes of tree bark. This kind of clothing was, at any rate, used before the war in many places, even not far from Moscow. Perhaps that is one of the reasons that the northerners are more quiet. The Ukrainian peasant, living on a more fertile soil was used to a more comfortable life. That was true concerning clothing too. He, indeed, misses the products of factories much more than his northern brother does.

Besides, the Ukrainian peasant has become rebellious in consequence of the constant change of regime. Is it not true that, for two years, he has had to endure, with almost every new moon, a new government? After this, and very soon, there will not be an administration which will easily gain his respect. Certain moral conceptions which should underlie any form of State have been overthrown.

The masses have become aware of their power but, unfortunately, they have not learned, as yet, to use it as a power of order and organization. Once they cheered the Bolsheviks for having given them the right to take possession of all soil. But since the Bolsheviks, too, tried to build up an organization by means of a dictatorship and began in their turn to impose a strict regime upon the agricultural districts, the peasants came to themselves again.

Now the Ukrainian nationalists and the Black Anarchists courted them. The Whites also tried to dominate them in their way. Makhno, the sly one, knows better how to win the peasants. "Land and freedom," these were old slogans among them. Makhno knew it. So he gives what they want. They do not realize that arbitrariness can become fatal to every one of them, too.

Khortiza, October 15, 1919

Yesterday I called on our old neighbor. He is a retired teacher who, of course, does not get his pension any more, since everything is topsy-turvy. It is hard on that old man who has labored during thirty years in a toilsome position. And now he has to starve. His house is afflicted in a special manner. Although all rooms had been searched through and all furs and warm clothes had been stolen, "they" demand anew every day some treasures. His daughter had buried the family silverware in the garden. Once that was found, the Anarchists give them no rest, vexing them constantly in hopes of finding more treasures. Yesterday these brutes called together an inquisition for questioning that respectable man. Their purpose was to find out through him where rich people were living. He in all seriousness could not tell them their hiding-places. As a result they prepared to shoot him. They pushed him against the house, his face toward the wall. Then they crackled with the rifles, without, however, shooting. By bringing him into a terrible mortal fear, they expected him to be willing to "confess."

They have not killed him, but he is nearly broken down. The old man sat there telling me of his experience. Obviously my sympathy gave him some ease of heart. But he had not yet finished his story when the house was filled anew. We had the impression that these new-comers had again something special in mind. With a peculiar curiosity they looked upon me. I noticed that they were expecting to see an enemy. I defied their inquisitive looks and was astonished that nobody asked any questions finally.

Today I learned that after my departure they had inquired urgently about me. They firmly believed that I was an army officer. The neighbor explained that I was a scholar. But they rather believed their own supposition.

Consequently, some wild looking chaps came into our house and held a trial with me. They charged me with having observed the bombardment last night; they had seen that I walked up and down before the house as if spying the locality. Likewise, they knew that I was in possession of a hidden machine gun.

In hearing such foolish pretexts I could but laugh. I made them understand that I knew very well they were looking for a pretext. And then I said, "Although I cannot get any sense out of the whole firing on the river I look for a change, no matter in whose favor. We do not even know who your adversaries are. For us, this present life has become unbearable. Can't you realize that this slavery has at last brought us to the verge of despair?"

And then I made an appeal to the members of our household; I mean the Anarchists staying with us. They were a little embarrassed, but remained silent. It is, however, noteworthy that the inquisitors left me alone. Was that, perhaps, after all, the influence of our men who seem to have respect for a writer?

Khortiza, October 17, 1919

Autumn will soon be over; we hope that before long it will become very cold. It is true, we do not know what fuel we will have to heat the house with this winter; and yet our hope is based on the help of the frost. The idea is this: as soon as the Dnieper freezes and the ice will bear weight, then a change must come, for then either those on the other side can cross the river, or these here can force the others to retire. If the others are the Whites and they are able to repulse these Anarchists, then many of the young volunteers of these colonists will come home.

I am sure the Whites are not the ones to save Russia, and thus their rule can, at the best, be just a passing phase in the development of our country. But our feeling now is, let come whoever will, be it even the devil himself, conditions can not be worse than they are made by these fiends. So many are saying: "Save us, frost! Dnieper, freeze!"

Alas, the thermometer goes up and consequently our hope goes down. The Dnieper still flows . . . .

Uf, these bandits! What they force us to do! We have to get fuel for the stove. We have a hard time to find it. There is a farm about half a mile away from here. The owner left it, as he could no longer endure the oppression of these vipers. There in the back yard is some straw left. That is the place where my friend and I have to get fuel. We carry it home on our shoulders. We make big sheaves and balance them on our bent backs until we reach home. That is an awful job. The straw pile has been stirred up by men and cattle during the wet weather in search for dry food. And now the wet part is frozen. It is like a prisoner's job at hard labor; to work with bare hands until you find some dry straw! From all sides tunnels are made into the pile. But this mining work is not done with proper system. Very often it happens that when you have worked your way through and you just start to exploit the mine, it collapses and you once more set to work with blue-red, frozen fingers. Gasping for breath we at last arrive at home, but we have to repeat this business very, very soon, because it requires huge quantities of straw to warm a house. The river does not freeze and yet it is cold, especially at our altitude where the wind blows wildly. In the meantime, our "guests" sit near the stove and give snarling signs of dissatisfaction—they are not contented with the temperature of the rooms.—

It is exasperating. Did I spend years and years of university study to heat the stove for these rude fellows? Did we not all the time believe that the ignorant masses wanted to be enlightened by us? And now we realize that they do not want our wisdom. Who is asking for wisdom? They have reached the final conclusion of all quest for truth. We, the representatives of a higher knowledge and of science, were digging like moles under the ground, did not see what was going on. O tempora! O mores! But let us at least learn one thing before we again start discussing the causes and consequences of Carthage's destruction. We cannot understand life except by living it. Let us realize our situation this time: they are the masters, and we are the slaves. Well, we know after all, things like that happened sometimes before in history. But being refined and sensitive we feel the weight of the disgrace doubly. We become indignant, for instead of being custodians of science and wisdom, we have simply replaced horse-power in the service of debauchees. Are we not going to become rebellious? The men of Sparta, we will not imitate—they took up arms. That is poor spirit, we know. No doubt, when we prove ourselves nobler than our tormentors, we must also use nobler means than they are using.

Khortiza, October 19, 1919

For some time I have been writing the notes of my diary in the French language. It is getting to be very dangerous. Makhno has given orders to his spies to do away, pitilessly, with every one who has hostile opinions about him. In order to excuse their own cruelty before us, the bandits bring all kinds of invented stories into circulation. Today our so-called commander came home—well, it is their home now more than ours—and worked himself into a state of great excitement. He told us with satisfaction, that many of the colonists had been hanged.

I had to hold back in order not to burst into exclamations such as "Murderers!" I only asked, "Why?"

He then related this story, pretending to believe what he was telling. A hostile detachment had succeeded in passing over the great bridge, and at once the settlers of that village had shown their sympathetic attitude by shooting from the houses upon the Anarchists. The attack, he said, had been repulsed, but the hatred of the troops against all colonists had after this event visibly increased. He then, confidentially, and as a pretense—told me that the commanders had had a hard time to dissuade the troops from taking revenge on all the colonist villages.

I tried to converse with them about this report, sitting amongst those lousy fellows and talking to them. They listened, indeed. But in vain I tried to prove the improbability of our general hostile attitude toward themselves. Probably, in their hearts, they knew that it was humanly impossible to vindicate their argument. I explained that the colonists, in regard to this battle remained neutral. It would be unwise for them to take another attitude, and therefore it was unthinkable for them to do so.

"Surely it is foolish," he said, "but nevertheless it is the truth." This case did actually happen. I was told about it by the commander himself who has taken and executed the "traitors."

Being cautious, I did not dare to disprove his arguments any longer and gave the conversation another direction. I made believe that I considered them seriously as a political party, and asked for information in regard to their organization.

"What is your opinion about anarchism?" I began to ask in the way Russians do. It is their manner to start with a distant question. Then they dwell on details, illustrating them from all sides.

A few of them shrugged their shoulders as though to say: "The devil knows, we don't."

The commander, however, anxious not to lose credit in my eyes, apologized, "Why, we are enemies of the Whites, the old officers with the golden shoulder straps. We fight just the same against Bolsheviks who have betrayed our freedom!"

"You, thus, fight for the idea of freedom?" I asked naively.

"Yes, sure!" he became reassured; "there shall be no political dominations any more."

"What is the meaning of that?" I continued to ask.

"Our Father Makhno can explain it better to you than I can." Then he produced from his pocket a printed sheet of paper which served him, as I saw from the cuts, for cigarette paper. He asked me to read it since he was poor at reading. I now got the vision of former times when I saw them sitting around and listening.

There it was: no State favor should exist any longer. Nobody should rule and nobody be ruled. Each man was to live according to his insight and act according to his conscience. The formation of co-operative organizations would be allowed. For the rest, however, there should be absolute freedom.

Here I stopped for a short remark; "Are you convinced that you always act according to these principles?"

"Sure enough," there came an energetic voice. "There are no rulers with us, we all are equal."

"Is that so?" another exclaimed ironically. "There, look upon our chief. He is just a little man; but does he not give us orders? And I tell you, the thirst for power possesses all our commanders."

"Who elected them?" the leader triumphed.

"Tell me about voting," the other cries. "When we are to vote, your friend cries out your name, and if he has the strongest voice—you are elected."

Now there arises a wild discussion. For the first time I witness how anarchy eats away the very bond which holds them together. I notice that their organization, however insufficient it may be, is being considered burdensome by these arbitrary Anarchists. There is sometimes a quarrel for whole days between them when one division is to replace another at the front-line. Finally the opposing forces have to give in, but it irritates them. They all are simple-minded people who, to be sure, wish to have all rights but no responsibilities toward others.

Khortiza, October 20, 1919

Our telephone division, eight men in all, has been with us for three weeks. They are more decent than others, if one may speak of decency in connection with these people. Among them there are some non-peasants, and even some idling students who never could make good.

Gradually they become tame in our house. So far we have been able to appease their desires, above all their gluttony; and now they draw in their claws as beasts of prey in similar cases would do. Our yard has little to attract them, for it is no farmer's yard with stables and grain barns.

They live at random in a careless way. When they have had a good meal, and we have succeeded in warming their rooms sufficiently, and the student hammers on the keys of the piano,—then they are even willing to jest with children.

Sometimes we overcome our feeling of repugnance and sit in their midst. We are glad when they act decently toward us. We then discover that they, although rotten, are human beings with human emotions. In homes where the colonists persisted in a reserved manner the armed men remained beasts of prey, as they were at the beginning. Of course, I must say that we were fortunate in getting these telephone-men; they have had some schooling, and that makes them appear a little more polished. Yesterday when an armed cossack, wrapped in a wonderful fur which he had stolen somewhere, entered our house and was ordering preserved tomatoes, pickles, ham and eggs, and Marguerite, not being able to satisfy him, was in danger of life, then it was our telephonists who chased him away.

One of our men is called Ivan. Ivan is, strangely enough, poorly clothed; quite differently from the others. I asked him once what reason there was for this. He did not want to rob, he said. What, I said to myself, is it possible? He surely must be the white raven among the black ones. Indeed, it proved to be so.

One day I was sitting in the adjoining room and heard how they made fun of Ivan. "How foolish," somebody said, "to go around with worn-out clothes and torn boots. You did not secure even a warm overcoat." Ivan laughed and joked in return. Since then I became especially interested in him.

He was not an Anarchist, he told me, when alone with me. He was a true Bolshevik. He had joined the Anarchists, he explained, because he lived in a region where the Whites had seized the rule and had tried to mobilize him for their army. Thus his intention was to go over to the Bolsheviks as soon as the battle line would be drawn near to where he was. He did not want to be considered an Anarchist at all.

Ivan is not dull, but he is weak. He does not try to influence his comrades toward a better judgment.

He speaks with much respect and heartfelt concern of his mother and his sister-teacher left behind. There is, in spite of all, some culture in this man. And he is humorous, too. It is not satiric mockery but good-natured humour. After all, you feel a kind of sympathy with him. Even we, who almost have forgotten laughter, cannot but be amused.

Ivan is lazy beyond measure; the lice nearly eat him; he scratches himself, but never stops to think of cleaning up. The parasites have sucked out almost all of his blood, it seems, but he just lets them have their way. He simply laughs when we admonish him to get rid of these vermin. He does not dislike lice. He recently said jokingly, "I would not kill the capitalists either, although they are worse than lice. I would be ready to perish at any time if only the idea of communism would be safe." A unique Bolshevik, at any rate! He is not typical of the Communists in Russia. They do not want to be martyrs; they want to dominate. Ivan is honest; I cannot but believe there is not a trace of selfishness in him. Who can cast a stone at this man?

The others are not of his kind. And yet it is a group different from the rest.

Fedya, too, pretends to condemn the actions of the Makhno-Anarchists. He, it seems, feels some remorse after all. He did not like to go with these people, for he left his young wife behind. He is longing for her, and he cares, too, because he has had no word from her since he left. He comes from Guliay-Polye, the large town where Makhno is at home. That is the reason why they call that town Makhnograd in analogy with Petrograd. At his central station there, Makhno began his work. Fedya tells me that he was compelled to join Makhno to save his life and property, for Makhno had begun to exterminate all people who were not on his side. He considered everyone his adversary who did not join his ranks.

Makhno is unusually cunning and energetic. They say he has worked twelve years in Siberia in a penitentiary, and that it was there where his insatiable thirst for revenge arose. He never hesitates to act upon his principle. As he was deliberating with Grigorieff, a popular adventurer in the Ukraine, he shot down his rival. That was the simplest solution. Human life counts for nothing with him.

The value of human life is at present still lower here in the Ukraine than it is in Northern Russia. Is it not a common reaction among the Russians? To tell the truth, the Ukrainians are Slavs by race as well as the others, and there is very little difference between them, in spite of all ridicule now made by some nationalists. The Russians as well as the Ukrainians are known throughout the world as patient; they discuss things endlessly before acting upon them. These same people have suddenly become extremely aggressive. The Makhno-Anarchists, at least, never discuss; their unvariable command, in entering, always is, "No negotiation." (nye rasgovarivaty!) But perhaps I should not generalize this observation. It is true, indeed, the less corrupted Anarchists do philosophize for hours when they are fed and warm. That is true with regard to Ivan and Fedya. These two are gradually becoming normal. They even asked for books to read. And strange to say, they have been reading now for days in the works of Turgenieff and Lermontoff.

The fat one—thus we call one peasant who belongs to the telephone detachment—has taken pleasure in dressing well. He wears very good boots, which are always shining. His suit is made of enviably good English cloth. He got it after a successful battle with the Whites who are being supported by the English. After a long military service he has lost almost all the clumsy peasant-like behavior. My friends have more confidence in him than in the others. But as he claims to have joined the Anarchists without any reason whatsoever, I do not trust him. He boasts that his father owns a big farm and that he provided him with a horse, when he joined Makhno. It might well be true. We found out that there are many wealthy peasants among these Anarchists. They remain like others for a while in the horde, and when they think that they have gathered enough prey they return home with horses and clothes. Some others of the rich peasants follow Makhno just because they want to save themselves.

Yesterday there was at our house an awful drunkard with the harsh voice typical of that kind of people. They say, he owns rich mines somewhere around Taganrog. After those have been taken from him, his character has revealed just a common robber.

There are many others fanatically possessed by hatred of the Whites. They, indeed, made themselves detested by the whole peasantry. Since we are regarded as partisans of the Whites—although this accusation is false—they pitilessly treat us as their enemies. Partly, of course, their enmity originated in wartime when propaganda was directed against all Russians of foreign descent. The high wave of nationalism swept away even the Russian peasants in the remote villages. Nationalistic fanaticism always blinds those possessed by it. So these colonists, the most loyal citizens of Russia, were denounced as enemies.

I recall an event of a few months ago. It is characteristic of the Whites and explains at the same time the uprising of the peasants.

I arrived one day at the railway station N. K. My place of destination was about twenty miles away. No man could be found who would dare to drive with a horse team over the steppes at night. So I had to remain in the village until the next morning. At the station there had also arrived a train with guardsmen of the Whites, who claimed to restore public order in these regions they were just occupying. And this was the way they enforced good order into the villages: they burned down several houses to punish the rioters. The same men robbed me in the street in the village where they were in power. I was going further to find a place for the night. Soon I met three officers and told them what their soldiers had done to me. But they did not take the matter seriously, replying that they lived under the same conditions as all riot armies.

One of them turned to me as the others went on and said confidentially: "Had we sooner tried to meet the demands of the people this deep moral ruin would not have come over Russia. Too late we realize our fault."

I was glad of this man's sound judgment. But was it right to accept the corruption with resignation? Or should one conclude that the permission for pillage was a confession that they were willing to let the soldiers do the same thing which had been their own privilege under the old order of things? Who knows? But it is a matter of fact that all moral conceptions now are confused. It was known, of course, throughout the world that in Russia the conceptions of the wrong of stealing never were equal to those in Western Europe. Who had not heard of huge corruption in civil and military government, or of the fatal inclination for stealing in general? The colonists always complained of being robbed of horses, grain, and other things.

Never, however, had this crime grown so wild and so general. That is the result of war and revolution.

Quo vadis, poor Russia? Those men of Russia, who were godfathers at the birth of these conditions surely were not aware what the consequences would be.

And as to my own situation, what is it all about, this philosophizing? Is it the process of acclimatizing? No, no upright man accustoms himself to slavery! . . . .

Khortiza, October 22, 1919

How terrible! The tall Cossack was here today, he had been in our house already a few days ago. He announced that it had proved impossible to tolerate any longer the pretended neutrality of these Western farmers. The fight had reached its climax and they had now decided to act upon the idea, "He who is not for us is against us." We must now decide whether we want to be on their side and fight against their foes, the Whites. Should we refuse to do so, they would draw the conclusion that we were pro-White and consequently we should have to suffer their vengeance. And he left no doubt about what it meant. We would be erased, as he said. And he added, "You know that our flag is black and represents the symbol of death, which is sure to all our enemies."

These days hung over our heads like a threatening storm. How will this all end? . . .

Khortiza, October 23, 1919

We feel as though condemned to death now, and that there is nothing left but to wait until the executioner comes. Those who are not yet apathetic are thinking of escape. But the Anarchists have announced that whosoever will be found three steps from the house after sunset would be shot without signal. Indeed, there are always so many armed horsemen that an attempt to flee would be surest death. And besides if one should flee, his family, remaining behind, would be endangered. And then, where to go? I know of but one safe escape, that is to reach a country beyond the Russian boundaries.

Khortiza, October 24, 1919

A terrible event has happened. We learned about it two days ago, but we did not believe the rumour. Today we received the surest confirmation of the facts. The village Dubovka does not exist any more. This colonist village is only twenty miles away from here. Many people of our place had relatives and friends there. The history of that village ended the 18th of October, 1919.

The 17th of October, at night, a band of horsemen surrounded the village and divided themselves in such a way that all farms could be attacked at the same time, so none of the inhabitants would warn his neighbor. Thus they made a complete slaughter. All male inhabitants above fifteen years of age have been cut down in cold blood. Eighty-four lives have been taken.

There must have been heart-breaking scenes when—as we are told—wives in despair tried to protect their husbands or sons by covering them with their own bodies, with the result, of course, that they lost their lives likewise. Most of the women, scared by the slaughter, ran away with their children, barefooted and in night clothes. It was bitterly cold that night. They were seeking refuge in the neighboring village, four miles away. But even there they were not to find rest from the evildoers. The same slaughter was going on there, too.

It is inexplicable, but it is a fact, that the tragedy was repeated here on only ten farms. Then the murderers retired. Many of them have been recognized as inhabitants of the neighboring Ukrainian villages. After this, the Russians of the neighborhood came like hyenas to get the spoil. Everything portable is being moved to their homes. Not only cattle and furniture but even roofs are taken away. That is what they are doing just now while I am writing. People in quiet countries hardly will believe the story of the tragedy. And yet we can prove it. In a state of high tension we are waiting for a similar fate. The mental strain deadens all the pain which we have to bear daily, and which torments us so severely. We have not yet been faced with the decision. But it is as clear as sunshine that we cannot make a compact with a gang of assassins.

Tomorrow the fourth regiment comes back from the front line, and the sixth has to take its place. We know enough of those heroes. There the mad devils are together. We tremble. We know what may happen.

Khortiza, October 26, 1919

Our commander told me today that the irritation of the Anarchist against us had diminished. Probably they consider their fighting position more favorable now. The last days the telephone calls were seemingly very exciting. Today they do not speak so much.

Yesterday I heard them asking about the city of Yekaterinoslav, whether it was still in their hands or not. Although we prick up our ears we dare not inquire directly about their fighting situation, so as to give them no excuse for suspecting our neutrality. The attitude of the Anarchists toward us is as menacing as ever. There is a special board of inquisition, one might say, which likes to appear as being occupied with counter espionage. It is headed by the ill-famed Father Pravda. They speak of him as the right hand of Makhno. He is a man of an unusually strong and vigorous constitution though his legs have been amputated sometime ago. He stands and walks on artificial feet which are fastened to his short stumps. He has been a beggar, they say. Now he is one of the most brilliant stars among the Anarchists. They even gave him the honorable surname Batyko, meaning, Father.

He pays no heed to anybody and does not shrink from any means of torturing people.

Not far from our house lives a man who was part proprietor of a factory. Evidently he has some money. Batyko Pravda managed to find a pretext to cross-examine him. He must confess where he has hidden his arms. Since he did not have any they went on with the inquisition. They knouted him, they took off his clothes and put him over a flame to apply a new torture. Then again they erected gallows and had him hanging until he was near to death; then they would release him from the loop. This kind of extortion was continued for a long time.

The other day they tortured a man to make him confess which of the colonists had hidden arms. As the pains became unbearable, the man was weak enough to give a few names just to avoid being tortured any longer. They immediately laid hold of the young men named. It happened that they were two of my students, two young teachers. During three days, at the beginning of every hour, they beat them with leadknouts until at last they begged their torturers on their knees for the *coup de grace*, the finishing stroke.

Finally they were sent back, but people who have seen them assure me that there is no spot on their bodies which is not sore. They lie there like the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. It has been difficult to take off their clothes because they were healed into the wounds. These innocent victims are lying now with their festering wounds unable to turn from one side to the other.

A mill owner, father of a large family, has been so maltreated that he died after two days.

A few days ago these inquisitors were in our house. They pretended that my friend and I were hiding two bales of cloth. This monstrous statement had just the purpose of vexing us. I was not at home and so they sent after me. When they were threatening my friend with their revolvers he fled to the Anarchists who had been staying with us for many weeks and they, indeed, averted the peril. They left before I came back.

They had gone on to our neighbor and had searched through his whole house. They found but a piece of sole leather and took it. That was the last for this time.

A Westerner reading this will say, why mention the robbing of a piece of sole leather? Oh, you out there, you don't know the value of all those little things. You cannot realize the loss of such a thing. We do. It is of much more value than gold and silver. There is no leather in the whole country. No factory has been working for years, no import is possible from other countries. If you could see how precious a needle became to us! We borrow it and take great care not to break or lose it because the loss is irreparable. By no chance can you buy a needle. And nobody can make it from iron-wire. Yet our old clothes need to be mended. Revolution is an awful state, and the provocateurs certainly did not realize the consequences. I blame the revolutionists, but I blame not less the old regime which made the revolution unavoidable.

Everybody is praying, Save us, O Lord, from our tormentors!

Khortiza, October 27, 1919

We all have our own peculiar fate. There hardly can be found another family, it seems to me, which has had to endure so many tragic blows as the family W.

I learned to know those people during the first enslavement. Their house is not far from ours, so one can go over without passing through the street. After I had been there once they asked me to call often. I understand that. Every one of us feels the need of looking into the face of somebody who is not an Anarchist. We all wish to confess our troubles freely to a sympathetic friend, to make a clear confession of suppressed ideas. I became the confessor of the family W. They are sensitive people and that is the reason why they suffer mentally more than many others, especially the father. Everytime, when

I call in for a moment, it seems to me, that I notice a few more lines on his face, which tells of his sorrow and grief. It must pain him to keep silent when insolent invaders make his home theirs and force the legal owner to content himself with two small rooms for the whole family; when rough fellows empty the wardrobes and chests and drawers, when thieves eager for plunder search their pockets for watches, purses, and knives, or when they pull the wedding rings off their fingers; yes, he must remain quiet even when the honor of his daughters is endangered. Of course, when the situation became so serious that they tried to lead away his eldest girl, who is beautiful, he indeed could not silence himself any longer. Then he spoke, although not in the way his inner excitement would dictate. To the extent of his whole will power, he restrained himself and spoke in a quiet tone with those ravishers. He tried to persuade them that his daughter was sick and must be put to bed. He had to hide her because he knew that she would be lost if they should find her. Having saved her once, he had no assurance whatsoever that all danger was over. It is there as long as these Anarchists stay in our town. Apparently there is no tendency to leave as yet. The inner tension of expecting them from one time to another is consuming his very heart. He is too alarmed to sleep, and if sometimes he succeeds in quieting his nerves and falls asleep, which is the only comfort in these troubled times, there surely will be a night visit from these hyenas. It is useless to oppose them, he must let them in. Then anew the heart contracts convulsivly as if in danger of being taken by eagle's claws. And so, shivering with cold and excitement, he sees these vagabonds invade his family sanctuary and profanely turn bedding upside down, rummaging in all ends and all corners. At the same time they treat the inmates of the house like enemies on whom they must take revenge. And such visits, some nights, are repeated more than once.

This man suffers from his fate more because of the weakness of his nerves. Not long ago a projectile fell down very close to their house, and the explosion caused the breaking of many windowpanes, which upset him very much.

Mr. W. tells me about his sorrows and these confidences are perhaps his salvation. It means a relief to him when someone listens with understanding.

The only way out of our situation in Russia seems to be emigration. We talk much of countries with settled conditions and a better social order and better educated citizens. It sounds like soothing music to many when I speak of my experiences in foreign countries. Then they forget for a moment their sorrows. Because I know this, I direct conversation very often to this theme. So I did many times with my restless neighbor. But each time when I came in again I found him in despair. He cannot hope any more for a good outcome, for a better future. And he is not the only one of that kind. Not being able to hope any more is the most terrible catastrophe which can occur to men.

Fate has no pity on us. Yesterday I called again on W. and found the whole family in deepest distress. A letter was handed to me. It was written by a relative of theirs and had been forwarded secretly to them. It read, "We are writing this in confusion and with hearts petrified by fear. They came to us, too. You know whom we mean. They undressed us, taking from us our clothes, except the underwear, and started their gruesome, cruel play with us. They shot through both hands of our father and forced him to sit down with them at the table and drink liquor. They wanted him to touch glasses together. Father looked upon us with a look which reflected deepest-despair and cut deeply into our souls. We shall never forget it. We stood there in utter distress and suffered their derision.

But that was not enough. They went upstairs and dealt cuts at brother John's face with notched sabres. Then they tried to cut his arms from his body. He fled, and later we found his body lying in a heap of chaff. They, whom we cannot name because words would be unsufficient to describe them, they evidently have delighted in increasing his pain by throwing chaff into his wounds. He never will be able to tell us.

Our youngest brother had the idea of frightening them by fearless energetic encounter, but he paid for it with his life; they shot and cut him down. Our nephew, Francis, was beaten with knouts and blunt objects until he broke down and will never awake again. Henry and his wife, seizing their child, tried to escape; but we found them later in the garden, dead. We, too, are wounded, my left ear is half off; I have deep gashes on the forehead, and I have my hand in dressing. An old shirt which I found I used for bandages. Of course, we had to abandon our house and are staying in hiding with friends in the neighboring village. We will not give any names because we are not sure whether or not this letter will reach you. They tell us that our house has been burnt down since. We heard also dreadful stories about your place. We wonder whether you are still alive."

Then with a little different handwriting there were added these words, "If our God has not forsaken us yet and if we should meet again in this life, let us join hands and, without looking back, leave the land of our affront."

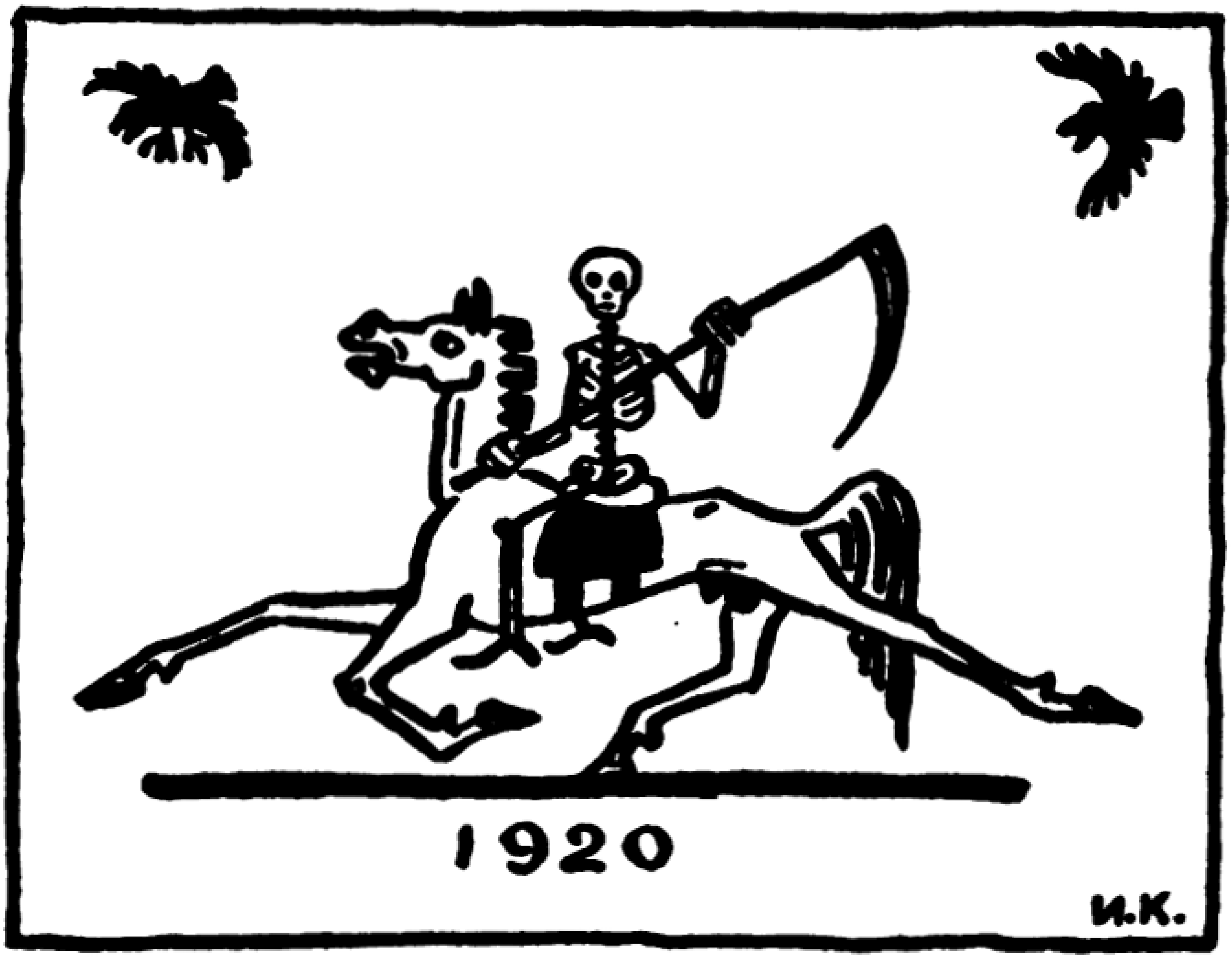
I dropped the sheet upon the table and looked up. Despair! What should I say to them? Words seemed inadequate confronting such heavy blows; would one protest with words against such elementary phenomena as lightning and thunderbolt?

Silently I gripped their hands and left the house.

And today I am not able to think of anything else but of the unspeakable tragedy of that family.

I understand that these people, although deeply religious, despairingly cry out: "Is there a living God?"

Verily, those who never experienced what we are going through now, never will comprehend how we suffer. Never! It is impossible!



1920

И.К.

Khortiza, October 30, 1919

No help in sight! Deepening of the distress!

Many Anarchists are falling sick of camp-fever. Little wonder! These men observe no rules of hygiene whatsoever.

But we all are becoming a prey to this contagious malady. And we have no means of prevention. We have no soap, no change of underwear. Even combs and razors are lacking. We look like savages, with unkempt hair and neglected beards. I, however, possess a razor which I keep hidden, but it is impossible to use it because if I should appear clean shaven they would know that I had a razor and surely would take it away.

In our house, too, there are three men sick. Marguerite takes care of them regardless of the fact that they are our enemies. She does not stop to think that they are our tormentors but is nursing them with earnest concern. Even things that somehow had been hidden in dark corners she does not retain. She offers them the last canned cherries. She makes tea for the thirsty sick men as often as they want it, although she nearly breaks down from exhaustion herself.

While the fat fellow accepts all as if it were his due, Fedya is moved by a deep gratitude. He feels that he is passing the crisis now and wants to show his appreciation of the faithful care. Thus, he gave to Marguerite a hundred ruble note. He says she has saved him; without that care he would have been dead.

Khortiza, November 5, 1919

A new pitiless enemy has arrived. We all are lost. The "Black Death" is about. No pity where he takes hold.

At first the Anarchists were taken ill. They were lying in the houses, and the inhabitants of our town took care of them. Now the contagion has spread to us: Spotted fever! I questioned doctor H. He confirmed the report that in most of the cases it had been the spotted fever, in some others it was the so-called intermittent fever. I never had heard of that. This illness, after about two weeks, leaves its victims for a few days. The fever is gone, the sick believe it is past and begin to eat. But that is the worst thing to do. Soon after, the fever returns with redoubled vigour. It seems almost like a cat playing with a mouse. When the mouse seems to be set free and is just about to escape, the cruel tormentor jumps up again and strangles the helpless animal.

There is no way to escape, for even the doctors, under the prevailing circumstances, know of no means of protection. Isolation of the sick would be the only possible measure, but it is not at all feasible. The Anarchists do not allow the sick ones to be gathered at special houses. It has been tried; now of course, it is too late. There are too many patients already.

One of the two doctors at our place has become sick, too. In the pharmacy there are no more drugs.

Painful is the thought that we all are going toward the same destiny. Sooner or later each one has to face it.

The day before yesterday one of my colleagues died, and one of my students, an eighteen year old girl. Very few people were following the two coffins to the cemetery. As we were filling up the graves with earth we became aware of how weak we already are. We nearly failed to finish our task.

Great sorrow and distress is now in every house. Each of the six thousand inhabitants of our town, in one way or another, has to take care of sick people.

In our house, besides the Anarchists, the little daughter of my friends has fallen sick and also the grandmother. They lie there unconscious, the poor victims, in high fever, and we are unable to do the least thing for them. We cannot even call the physician to their assistance. The only doctor who is still about goes from house to house and from bed to bed and is unable to finish the round. He is already so exhausted that doubtless every moment he must expect to be taken ill, too. This malady spares nobody.

Khortiza, November 15, 1919

We have now reached the stage which I foresaw. There is no physician to be called upon. Both are dangerously ill, and we fear that they will never get up again.

With us at home, everybody is sick, except Marguerite and myself.

One thing which I am very much alarmed about now is the growing difficulty in obtaining fuel for heating the house. I am doing things which seem almost a sacrilege: I felled trees in the orchard. I can think of no fuel but this. Some people cut wood out of their houses, chop off the rafters under the roof.

Marguerite drudges her life out over the work with the sick. Day and night, there is literally no rest for us. Really it is much worse at night time than in the day. We cannot alternate with each other because it takes more than one person at once to take care of the sick. And yet, how little we are able to ease their sufferings. The only ease we can give them is to cool their hot foreheads and hold the glass of water to their lips. They are so helpless. Often we exhaust every means in trying to calm the delirious ones in their ravings. One feels as if he were in a madhouse. While I, for a moment, sat down near the bed writing a few lines of my diary, the eldest girl with a sudden movement of her hand takes from me the sheet of paper in order to read it. She wants to see whether I am writing to a foreign country for help. She has a notion of being taken away from Russia by an aeroplane. In her state of high fever, the desire to escape from this troubled country had given rise to impossible ideas.

Soon after this she inquired of me "whether the mermaid had arrived to deliver the sugar." She is longing for sugar. There is no sugar anywhere.

Suddenly my friend rises, puts aside his covers quickly and, with disturbed looks, is ready to leave the room. He says he must help his wife who is endangered outdoors by "those" (mostly we do not name the Anarchists—"those" indicates the whole company). I had much trouble in quieting the man in his delirium.—

I had to go away for half an hour today. I wanted to see whether in our neighbor's house really exist the same conditions as do in our own. It is the same. And those not yet touched by the malady feel already the shadow of that hand which soon will grasp them too.

The Anarchists began to carry away their sick men into the neighboring villages. Those, however, who are not sick, demand as before our slave service, regardless of whether we can take care of our own patients or not. They are our lords and masters, and we have but to obey, without offering resistance, every arbitrary mood of theirs. We scarcely are able to resist even in moral matters.

A moment ago a student of mine passed by. He gave me some news. All school buildings have become hospitals full of Anarchists. Boys and girls of our community are compelled to do service there. For the first they took the students who are still spared by the spotted fever.

The number of people not yet sick is already so small that the Anarchists could not find enough to do the work for them, and thus they got some more slaves in other colonist villages. As soon as they become sick too, they are taken back into their villages, and thus the contagious illness is spread rapidly all over the country.

The ?

The death harvest is increasing so rapidly that we are alarmed in spite of our prevailing apathy.

For many days I could not find a single minute to write down a line in my diary. There is no rest either at daytime or at night. The condition of my friend is most critical. For several days he has remained unconscious.

It is cold and dark everywhere. Weather and season intensify the cheerlessness of the day. At three o'clock in the afternoon it is dark, and we have to wait for daylight until nine o'clock in the morning. Until a few days ago we had practically no light at night, no kerosene. The only substitute was a smoking lamp with sunflower oil, which we have to use very economically. But just now a colleague of mine brought us a few drops, one might say, of stone oil, which we are using very carefully. We have put this precious liquid into the smallest lamp we have, and have screwed down the minute wick so that the burning flame appears hardly anything but a far away flickering Will-o'-the-Wisp. Without any light at all the children are very restless at night.

Now this poor lamp has become an object desired by the Anarchists. The Anarchists quartered with us are different ones now, because some, who became ill, have been taken away, and instead of them others have been sent. These newcomers are annoying us with their demands. They have discovered our lamp and want it now for themselves. Marguerite did not succeed in quieting them.

This time I became angry and with a vehement indignation I approached these unreasonable men. I stepped right before them, showing a decided attitude and rebuked them. They were really disconcerted, and when I noticed the effect of my words I turned their perplexity to our advantage. With quick and fitting words I so managed the attack that they could not even reply. They kept so quiet in the darkness that it almost seemed as if they had disappeared by some magic. And the light was ours.

The ?

Our colonist patients, in their feverish ravings, talk much of New Zealand, the land of their longing.

Anyone who has preserved any kind of hope for the future thinks only of emigration. But, alas, most of them emigrate to the cemetery. Through the window I see every day coffins passing by. Coffins? No, there are no coffins any more. They bury the dead without coffins, either in troughs or in sleeping benches or even bare. And the burying has become a difficult thing; there are scarcely any men left who can dig graves. Those who still are able to do it, take advantage of it and demand high pay. That is the reason why many graves are not filled up.

Yesterday the old, much troubled, pensioned-off teacher died also. All persons remaining in that house are ill in bed, eight altogether. I was called by the young man who looks after the sick people to help him carry out the dead body.

The house is without protection now, there are only women and girls and they are all sick. Strangers nurse them and also take care of the rulers, the Anarchists.

Khortiza, December 13, 1919

It is a sunny day with frost. We heard the thunder of the guns and cannons and pricked up our ears; is a decision near? Is the ice on the river strong enough to bear traffic? Our telephone men were in excitement, calling all the time.

But after a while the cannons ceased to shoot and only the rattling of the rifles was heard.

When in the afternoon our patients seemed to quiet themselves, I decided to make a little round through our neighboring houses. I hoped to find a little encouragement for myself, for I feel the stupor and the heaviness of our sorrows and sufferings. It is almost unbearable.

All faces presently became fixed in a stony expression—let anything come, they seem to say! It is true, the eyelids twitch in pain, and grief engraves its mark around the mouth, but there is no hope. Men die at this time, like flies after poisoned potion. First, all those men succumb who have suffered most mentally. First go the parents. The last ones are children and also strong young men. Those with weak hearts are sure candidates for death.

I never shall forget the picture I saw in the house of M.

I enter the house. Nobody moves. Even the usual group of Anarchists is absent. I go through empty, deserted, cold, and unfriendly rooms. For a moment I stop; to think what a proud and rich farm it was a short time ago—and now?

And as I open another door I grasp the tragedy of the situation. There they lie all together, the farmer, his wife, and their seven children. They lie on straw and the covers evidently are insufficient. Nobody has heated the stove. That is most likely the reason why the Anarchists left the house.

I look over the rows of these ill creatures. Then I go near to the youngest one. I take the little hand in mine. It is cold. I stroke the little head; ice-cold is his face. I comprehend: dead. Very likely, being unconscious, the child rolled off the straw onto the cold floor, and thus the frost gave the *coup de grace* to the sick, innocent being. In a low voice I notify the parents. Oppressed with fear, the mother tries with all her might to sit up and to see her dead child. She cannot do it. I give her my support. Her face is distressed and she begins to rave in delirium while I place her again on her straw bed.

I went out, and deep in my heart I felt an unspeakable sadness. But I had no time to brood over it. I had to bring help to those who, still alive, seemed predestined to die. After a while I found in another house two young girl orphans, who were nursing the sick in several houses, going from one place to another. They promised to look after the M. family too.

People who passed by the cemetery reported that there are no empty lots left.

And yet the number of deaths is growing daily. People are dying, dying . . . .

Khortiza, December 17, 1919

A thing scarcely believable becomes true: the Anarchists are preparing to leave. It awakens us from our state of petrifaction; it is like a ray of light in dark night.

But then? Well, then there remains with us suffering, sorrow, death, emptiness. What they took away nobody can bring back again.

I do not feel well. Yesterday I had a temperature of 99.5 degrees. What will happen when I, too, shall become unable to help? Marguerite cannot keep up very much longer, either. She looks suspiciously careworn. She is ill, I do not doubt it. She simply forces herself to remain on her legs and does not want to admit the truth. And I must not fail if she is able to carry on. I will remain on duty until I fall. That I vow.—

Oh, these scoundrels! Today there entered three mysterious fellows in high shaggy fur caps who arranged a trial with me. They charged me with conspiring against them, with planning an organized attack. They have seen that men are coming to me, and that I myself from time to time go out to see my friends. They demand that I deliver my machine guns. I make them understand that I know well all their accusations are made just as an excuse for the arbitrary action they are planning. We know too well already the methods of these "heroes" who are so wonderfully brave in facing unprotected men.

I was not alarmed at the thought of menacing death but I was afraid of preceding tortures. Just a few days ago one of Marguerite's brothers was beaten with lead knouts so terribly that he broke down and remained lying in his own blood, unconscious.

I wanted to avoid a similar experience. I called upon the Anarchists quartered with us to bear witness. They did not say anything to my disadvantage.

"Well then," I said, closing the session, "there is nothing to discuss." I went out without giving them any further notice.

What they may have talked among themselves

I do not know. I noticed, however, that the three devils left the house.

Our sick people became very excited at the scene created by those rough fellows. Their condition of illness grew worse. "They" kill many a man by such unseen weapons. How will they ever account for their deeds? They do not know what they are responsible for.

Khortiza, December 18, 1919

My temperature has gone up to 100.3. There is no doubt about it, I am getting ill. It was a bad night. I could not remain upright. On account of the precious stove heat we have to stay all in one room. There was no place to lie down flat; I had to bend in the form of a question mark to get down. My feet were under the bed of my friend. I had to look after him as he was throwing off his blanket all the time. I had an awful time keeping him covered.

Marguerite says that I recited French poems and asked her questions in French. Such unusual acting in present conditions is a typical sign of the spotted fever. I know, too, that I felt very badly.

Be that as it may, one thing is sure, the Anarchists are leaving, they are fleeing!

And strange to say, for all our service and care, they had no word of recognition. Devilish indeed is their conduct. Instead of taking vengeance on their enemies who are pressing them back, they avenge themselves on us. They run through all rooms and search for things they could take with them. They pay absolutely no attention to the sick people. There were even those who put a pistol to the breast of my friend in order to make him confess where he was hiding his money. That is what they are doing to dying men. Others threatened his wife with so much brutality that I thought they were going to put an end to her.

I followed them as they were making the round of our house. Strange to say, when I, in a quiet way, pointed out things as belonging to me, they abstained. I almost believe that their superstition, somehow, had associated me with spirits.

In one case, however, they could not resist their desires. There was a fur coat which a mill owner had brought over in order to have it saved with our help. The eagerness for such a precious thing infatuated one fellow too much. He would not listen when I told him it belonged to me.

They may leave us naked if only they stay away from us for ever and ever.

And yet—what shall we begin now? They have brought the pestilence into our houses. We must just lie down and die. That is the only outlook for the future.

A chill makes me shiver. I must write a line to one of my friends who, I believe, is still safe. He surely will come to help me if he is alive.

Khortiza, February 2, 1920

I am here in another house. The disease is overcome. I am still weak, it is true, but I can sit up in bed and continue my diary.

Oh, how far back is that time when I became ill. It seems to me almost like an eternity.

Memory has remained, and so I shall write down what I can recall.

That unforgettable night when the Anarchists left our house there on the top of the slope, we locked our door for the first time after a long reign of licentiousness. We were now alone in the house and felt, somehow, sheltered from danger.

The malady, more and more, had taken possession of me. I had taken my temperature; it was over 100 degrees. I was lying again, as the night before, on the floor, and was not able to stretch out my feet because of lack of space. In the adjoining room, however, I did not want to be, for it was full of lice. The evil spirits of those villains still haunted the now empty rooms. The objects used by them provoked our memories of their sojourn too strongly and oppressively. The rest of the rooms were in wild disorder and could not be heated because of lack of fuel. Besides, my presence in the sick-room was constantly needed.

After midnight Marguerite became unable to get up when one of the children was calling. We were all ill now; my friend, his wife, both daughters, the grandmother, and a girl, fifteen years of age, whose parents were living beyond the Dnieper, too far away to reach her at this time.

Very naturally the room was getting cold since no one took care of the stove.

My fever was increasing. I had the sensation that everything in my head was dissolving into minute molecules, which whirled around at a wild, raging, and always increasing speed. That it might not burst my skull I put cold compresses on my forehead. The heat I felt was terrible. With all effort possible I tried to keep conscious, because I felt the responsibility of caring for the sick. How much more agreeable it might have been to give way to the *dolce far niente.* The spotted fever usually takes away consciousness very soon. And thus one may call it a humane malady.

A few things far back came to memory. Some poetry of Koltzov and Pushkin and other Russian master poets came to my mind in very lively remembrance. Very probably I recited them, being delirious.

This was one of the most terrible nights in my life. And I have had a good many bad ones. Marguerite moaned. My friend did not recover consciousness for a single time and always threw off the covers, not knowing, of course, what he was doing. How much effort did it take to get up and cover him again and again! The older girl wished to have her bed remade, and the other school girl was always asking for water, and the little girl, who was recovering, was crying for bread. After the typhus, people have an unappeasable hunger.

The sufferings and needs of the others made me forget, to a certain extent, my own condition.

As the day was dawning, fatigue so got hold of me that I had an almost unsurmountable desire to surrender to sweet unconsciousness. But there again stood before my soul such a responsibility that I was terribly frightened over my weakness. It seemed as though I was the captain of a sinking boat, and had to stay on duty to the last. . . .

I cannot write any further, I am still too weak.

Khortiza, February 4, 1920

I suffered a relapse on account of recalling the past. The day before yesterday I began to bring back to memory the troublesome time and to take it down on paper. That set me back. However, today I feel much better again.

I have an unappeasable hunger. But these people have not enough bread even for themselves. Except three persons of this family, all are recovering at present, and we cannot help being constantly possessed by a vexing feeling of appetite. It is the same in the neighbours' houses and all around us. The Russian peasants feel no obligation to bring any help to the plundered colonists; with very rare exceptions, of course.

I cannot write for very long, so I will pause for a while. This time I want to continue the story from where I stopped the other day.—

After that terrible, almost endless, night came a gray, disconsolate morning. It became daylight in our room. The clock struck nine, and nobody came to look after us. Our room was cold, the window-panes were covered with thick ice-flowers; and yet there was no one among us who was able to make fire in the stove.

Suddenly the idea struck me that I had locked the door the day before, and therefore nobody could enter. Probably more than three times I tried in vain to get up. All objects seemed to be so unstable around me; they seemed even to turn around.

However, necessity and reason appealed to the will power within me and strained the physical forces to their utmost effort.

I succeeded in getting dressed somehow. Then I fumbled about like a giddy person and at last found the way out. Somewhat awkwardly I managed to unlock the door. My imagination traces my figure before me just now: I see how that man, who is I, must have looked while turning the key and pushing the door. I remember how I shuddered when the rush of cold air entering the open door struck me. I recall also well, the strange feeling that came upon me; it was as if I were a stranger, strange to myself. Not reasoning why, I went out of doors along the fence until I reached the next house. I asked whether some one could come to help us. There it was just the same, all were sick except a young girl, and she was not strong. She had recovered the first, but she was very pale yet. She promised, however, to come as soon as she had nursed her family.

I knew that she was promising more than she was able to keep. I left this house to enter the house right next to this one. Two men were busy in the kitchen, the only persons left untouched by the malady. They were frightened when they saw me. Evidently I looked very unlike a healthy man. One of them decided at once to come over with me. He supported me.

As he tried to make a fire he discovered that there were no matches, no fuel. Very resolutely he grasped the first available thing; he broke off a few stakes from the fence, ran home and brought two precious matches, more valuable than a load of diamonds at this time. After that he made a fire. More than two matches they could not spare. You could not buy them anywhere.

Toward noon a colleague entered. He had received my request and tried to help me. He is the man whose wife and daughters I protected in the very first days of the invasion. This man brought me down into the house of his sister, where there was, fortunately, still an empty bed. Since that time I have been lying in this home close to the main street.

In the house there, high up, where I lived before, death has entered. He has taken away both husband and wife. My friend and Marguerite are no more. How cruel it sounds! Bereft of their parents the two girls are left behind with their old, feeble grandmother.

Why just him,—my friend? I would not have given him up if I were to command life and death. He was an artist through and through. A teacher too, such as we seldom find. He had the rare gift of opening the eyes of youth to all that is beautiful. He taught them to see and to feel beauty. He made them able to retain and fix those objects of aesthetic experience by means of drawing, design, and sculpture. Thus he enabled them to conserve what they had seen and experienced in a genial moment.

Upon him very largely rested the hope of the few educated people who professed the belief that through art the realistic-materialistic way of thinking and acting, very common among the colonists in Russia, would progressively develop to an understanding of art, and would, at least, result in a universal spiritual need of art.

Maybe this anticipation was somewhat unwarranted, but it was there. The awakening for art amongst youth is largely the fruit of his work. Can one deny that we needed him? We should have him back. It was a calamity to have him die.—Now, can we really say that? What is our own future? Who is alive still? Are we not all in agony and in the clutches of death?

And yet, he who still lives, does have hope. I at least must try to come again to a belief in a future development. Friend, rest in peace! Your spirit did not die with you.

Is it not miserable to lament and to mourn and to complain? We have the will . . . . oh! these terrible pains in the chest again!—

It is afternoon. That excitement was too much for me. I fell back on the pillows. And yet, there is an unavoidable need for me to give expression, either spoken or written, to these pressing thoughts and these strong emotions.

My friend, who so faithfully and so often paid visits to me during my illness has probably become sick, too. She does not come any more. I am longing for her. Her spirit, her intelligent look, her upright and chaste mind—I miss her! I must write now.

The spotted fever is a malicious malady. Always that terrible high temperature. All kinds of mad ideas pass through one's mind. And then the long, dark, sleepless nights! Who could forget them? I was always terrified when, soon after three o'clock, night was falling. Had I been able to sleep or had I been delirious, as most people were, time would not have crept so slowly. Often I was lying there and could not make out the situation. One time it seemed to me as if one part of my body did not belong to me and thus enraged and molested me. Sometimes the legs did not belong to me; or again, the body up to the chest was not mine. Those are the symptoms of the spotted fever.

Khortiza, February 5, 1920

Now I question: was the epidemic the greatest evil that came to us in these last months? Hardly so! . . . .

When I hear that, today, there passed by our house twenty-one coffins—and yesterday their number was twelve—it alarms us not as much as the news of the return of the Anarchists. All these rumours have much probability. They did come back; three times they had come back. Why not a fourth time?

It was at Christmas and around New Year's day that they did return, for the last time. They rushed, plundering and robbing, through the colonist villages. The three industrial communities were again the worst off. This time the Anarchists were not driven by the Whites but by the Reds, the Bolsheviks of the North. I never will forget that desperate time. It was on Christmas Eve that we had our most appalling experience. In previous years in the houses here the Christmas trees were lighted.

Where was the joy of those happy days? So far away . . .

We were all on our sick beds. A twenty year old girl, related to my hosts, was with us; a girl willing to make sacrifice;—she was homeless herself when she fled with me in those memorable September days of last year; her former home had been destroyed by fire. It was she who took care of us.

It was perhaps ten o'clock at night when, suddenly, the windows were shaken by heavy strokes resounding gruesomely through the quiet dark night. Rough male voices were commanding to open.

Like a dove in a storm the nurse fled to my bed. She knew too well what kind of men they were. She was trembling; still, she was the only person in the house able to walk to the door. I could not help her either. The voices outdoors grew louder. Those men were going to break down the door or burn the house. That is what they were threatening, and what they are able to do.

Oh, it was a heartbreaking moment to see Cathleen—trembling with fear—going up to the door to meet those robbers and brigands. Like a hurricane they rushed into the unlighted house of ours. They ordered us to bring a lamp, and they themselves kindled the poor oil burner which the family was saving for the neediest cases in the sick room. Having that smoky light placed on the table, they sat down and demanded to be served with whatever there was to eat in the house. They ate the very last bit of bread and drank the very last drop of milk. Then they rushed eagerly to the wardrobes and chests. The drawers were thrown open with the greatest noise onto the middle of the floor. They really acted as if they were going to stab all of us at once. They had, of course, not the least consideration for the sick. They drove the house owner off his couch and took away his fur on which he was lying in default of a mattress. Cynic mockery was the only response when the sick man asked on what he was now to lie.

I was in the adjoining room and heard the proceedings with growing fever. Every moment I was expecting them in my room. Cathleen quickly put my last suit under my pillows and was standing near my bed with steadily increasing fear. It was an insoluble problem how to save that girl. Where could she go? Surely those intruders had occupied all houses of the town. I continually heard the passing of carriages. They had come in great numbers.

Suddenly it came to my mind that one of the neighbors, the dentist, had already overcome the sickness. There Cathleen would be in greater safety, I thought. Thus, upon my advice, she left the house and escaped before the bandits entered my room.

At last I heard heavy steps approaching my door. It was thrown open and three wild looking ruffians surrounded my bed. They asked for my class and nationality. "A Jew?" they asked. When I denied it, they seemed to take me for a "real Russian" and softened their manners a bit.

"Teacher?" they repeated after me. "Well, let's go." Besides my bed and a table there was no furniture, and thus they could not suspect anything valuable in the room. So they went out.

Three days and three nights the Anarchists were passing through our place. That was like it had been a week before: when one group had left the house another one came in.

It was terribly cold outdoors, and inside too at times, because the fuel was scarce.

Cathleen and her sisters came and cared for us as well as was possible.—

One thing more I cannot forget; I heard those poor cows bellow in the cold stable. They did not mind the cold so much but they had not had anything to eat. The last remnant of the food, up to the last blade of hay, the Anarchists had given to their horses. There was, now, no more milk. Those who were still sick did not want to eat very much; but those who were leaving the sick bed were all the more hungry. The weakened body needed for its restoration nourishing foods like meat and milk.

One day the Anarchists brought my bed into the common sickroom of the family and there we were lying side by side and suffering. They themselves sought booty over all the house.

Only after New Year's there came a change for the better.

Khortiza, February 6, 1920

Instead of the Ukrainian Anarchists now we are having the Russian Bolsheviks in the house. These latter are on the heels of the fleeing Anarchists and have taken up their station here. Most of the colonists fear the Bolsheviks as they did the Anarchists. We notice, however, that the Bolsheviks are organized in regular army troops. Often they show a human pity for the misery which has been caused by their enemies. They are conscripted soldiers recruited from all classes of society and are not all Bolsheviks by conviction.

These people cannot help us very much, of course, but we feel it already as a blessing when we are not robbed and cursed. It is true, on the other hand, that there is nothing left which could attract robbers.

The Bolsheviks have reorganized their armies. There seems to be enough discipline so that there is no stealing; at least not beyond that which has always been customary in Holy Russia.

Oh, there is cruelty enough everywhere after that accursed World War. How can one wonder when young men fall into moral confusion after having served in the army for four years, entered the war, and, up till today, continue in that rude calling?

Khortiza, February 11, 1920

I went out today in spite of severe snowdrifts. I could not stand it any longer in the room.

My first walk was toward that house, up beyond there, where I used to live before I was taken sick. In that sorrowful, empty house, the old grandmother sat together with the two orphan girls. Those two clung to me as if something of their beloved parents, with whom I had been most intimate, still hovered about my personality. I avoided speaking of their parents; I could not do it, the words would not come out.

Unforgettable remains with me that look of the eight year old girl, a look which disclosed an abysmal grief and sorrow. For her father and mother meant more to her than the rest of the world. Indeed, nobody is there to help them; in every house are wretched, pitiful conditions. Hunger, every day, touches them with its cold, bony hand. Shoes and clothes are insufficient. There is somebody who comes daily to heat their stove, they are telling me. They are looking almost bloodless. By all means, they must receive help.

Going home I became so weak that I was afraid of being unable to reach it. There were a few high snowdrifts which I nearly failed to cross. I entered a house to rest a bit. Thus I learned the recent story of that house. The father had died in these days of universal death. The mother was unable to walk as a result of spotted fever. The oldest son had also died, and the younger one had become deaf. This is what the daughter told me.

We all are, with a few exceptions, hard of hearing during the period of recovery, but some are afflicted more than others. A niece of Marguerite's is almost totally blind. The enlargement of her pupils has taken her sight away.

A young and very religious man is showing a strange attitude since the malady. Not long ago he went out one day in the streets and invited everybody to his house. He was inviting them for a meal.

His own wife did not know a single thing about it. She was, indeed, very astonished to see all the people enter. Her husband talked in a curious way to the invited guests. His mind is evidently affected.

The malady touches every weakness latent in the body and accentuates those weaknesses.

Poor and helpless, we drift at the mercy of fate . . . .

Khortiza, February 15, 1920

After the first excursion I had dared to make in most unfavorable weather, I had to stay in bed again for a few days. The temperature was rising, and there were all the symptoms of inflammation of the lungs, especially there were those vehement pains which put one out of breath.

Today, however, I feel better. I even got out of bed. I am disgusted with that bed; it is too short for me to stretch out my limbs. This was so uncomfortable during all those forty days of my illness. But there was no other bed available.

I am sitting here, covered with my overcoat, which I was able to keep because of its poor condition probably, and I am cold, although close enough to the stove. I found a piece of a broken looking-glass today, saw myself and was frightened: scared at the sight of myself. The eyes are sunk deep into the sockets, the head is spotted with bald places where the hair fell out, the beard is neglected and is growing irregularly. That is the picture of all of us. The women had to cut off their hair as short as possible, because of the difficulty of caring for it and because it falls out anyway.

In the afternoon the feeble smile of winter sun fills the damp room. I take my pencil. There are only a few sheets of white paper left. Therefore I have to economize to the utmost, for there is no paper in all Russia, I believe. Even if some speculators would have some I never would be able to get it from them because they ask money.—

In the Nicolaipol county, they say, the spotted fever is raging just as here. The widows of the village Dubovka, whose husbands were all killed one night, died of the spotted fever with the exception of a very few. Who wonders? They had, after that terrible night of slaughter and after the succeeding time of care and sorrows, no strength left to resist the malady. They are dead as their husbands are. We are not pitying them, but we pity their children. In that farming village alone there are left two hundred orphans. The houses of their parents are destroyed. Either they were pulled down to get the wooden parts because of the priceless value of wood in the steppes of the Ukraine, or they were burned down. Thus the children are to be distributed amongst the sixteen remaining villages. I am mistaken. There are in this district no sixteen villages left. In four of them all inhabitants have been driven out. The former beautiful homes are laid in ruins. And for these few people who are still alive quarters must be provided. There is no other way for us than to accept them into a communistic life.

Indeed, we become willing to help. Never before in our days of wealth would we have responded so quickly to a call for help. That is the way we act and re-act, we human beings. I am thoroughly convinced of the fact that the Western-Europeans would not do very much for us even if they knew conditions here. Their feelings would probably respond a little for a quarter of an hour when hearing all these things, but, besides alms, they would hardly bring us any help. I will not be too hard on them either, for they simply cannot enter into our helpless situation. I know Western Europe pretty well. I lived there for many years, and in different countries.—

What a big "emigration" has taken place. Forty percent of our population here has been settled in the cemetery. In Khortiza there were, besides the mill-owners and the craftsmen, thirty-eight farmers. Seven of them are still living. Some entire families died out. In some houses were found people who had been dead for eight days. One man was found cowering in a corner. In all probability he had broken down from exhaustion, and starvation had done the rest, for there was not found a bit of bread in that house.

In many cases this is the situation: parents have died and children survived. Without outside help they too are mostly lost.

Some political, inexperienced people got a notion, or a hope at least, that the English, the French, or the Germans, or even the Americans would come to occupy these territories and thus help us. Foreign nations will not trouble themselves about us; if they did, they would get for thanks only pestilence and revolutionary doctrines.

Khortiza, February 16, 1920

The process of physical recuperation is very slow. It is no wonder. During convalescence the body demands, after a long time of fasting, double and triple rations. That is the reason why all who were sick, in meeting each other complain about their unappeasable hunger and praise the good old times when bread, meat, eggs, and milk were in abundance. Finally one gets crazy about that question of our future. We all, without exception, see darkness there, or—a question mark. What will become of us?—

Yesterday my poor hosts took two orphans. They are children of their relatives. Their parents had a big, fine farm and were wealthy. They are dead now. The horses and the cattle are stolen. The buildings are burnt. In seeing these young boys in their wornout clothes you would hardly imagine it all. One is seven, the other nine years old.

They were but a few hours in the house when the youngest boy came in a great hurry to his new stepmother, crying and repeating all the time, "They are coming, they are here already!" He had seen armed men on the street. At this sight there had been recalled to his soul the memory of that fatal visit at home, when his father and his seventeen year old brother had been put to death before his eyes. His memory was still filled with vivid pictures of assassination.

We tried to calm him by saying that these men were Bolsheviks and did not belong to those robbers who would kill everybody.

Oh, the children! We are afraid of thinking of their future! Their number is so large. These colonists multiplied more than any people on the whole earth. Anthropologists will admit that. These colonists had no restriction in regard to the number of children. As a matter of fact, there could be found very few families with less than seven children, unless the parents were still young. Very often the members of a family number over twelve.

But now the problem of feeding and clothing has become a great one to us. If fathers and mothers were alive the problem would be much less weighty. But they were attacked by that insidious malady so severely that they offered no resistance to death.

Khortiza, February 17, 1920

Every day the sun comes out friendlier. We are moving toward spring. But up to the end of April the sick-rooms must be heated. We are so sensitive toward cold.

The trees are almost all cut off. What shall we do? It is such a barbarity! How many years it will take for new trees to grow up! There are no woods in the steppes. There is no railway communication. The woods of North Russia—there is plenty of wood there—are as unreachable for us as the woods in Central Africa. Those few locomotives that exist in this land of destruction do not carry wood. Instead, they bring men down from the North with every train—men to combat General Wrangel, who, with his army, broke through from the Crimea to conquer the North.

The grain mills, one after another, quit working, for there is no coal, no wood, no oil, and there are no driving belts. These latter, being leather, are stolen for footwear. The prices of flour rise to fantastic heights, and people are forced to sell to the speculators the most necessary furniture, even houses to be erected elsewhere, simply to get means at hand to pay for necessities of life.

Khortiza, February 18, 1920

By the thousands the Bolshevik troups are passing through our place. Most of the time they make a stay here. They, too, have no pity, even though we tell them we have no bread. Hungry soldiers do not deal gently. They have to have food even when they eat our last bread.

More than ninety per cent of our population here went through the malady. The great plague has ceased now. We, who have been left, must form a friendly alliance with life again, although it does not seem to meet us half way.

In our neighborhood the fever is still ravaging and spreading and spreading ever farther. The contagion is enormous, due to the most pitiful hygienic conditions among the Russian peasants. There is not only the lack of medicine and preventatives but also of practically everything else, down to clean body linen and bedding.

Khortiza, February 19, 1920

News of joy! There is help in view! The Mennonite colonists of the Berdyansk district are sending us help. It is certain. I know it through the best sources. At last—help!

Khortiza, February 21, 1920

The colonists in the Berdyanck district have sent a transport of flour and lard. We received only a part of the provisions sent. About half of them have been "confiscated" by some "Black Authorities." We call those robbers, or Anarchists.

A portion, however, has actually arrived. And surely, the givers will not stop continuing support on account of this misfortune—for what has been sent is but "a drop on a hot stone."

We are glad that the colonists there have not suffered so much that they could not share a piece of bread with us. There they have victuals, and the only question now is, how to bring them over to us, for it is a distance of ninety miles.

Those colonists are sending whole hospital outfits. They have sent some nurses too, in order to establish hospitals to prevent the further spread of this malady. They will take all sick persons out of private homes and place them where they will have proper care.

And more still. They have promised to share with us their small reserves of body linen and bed linen.

Our need and suffering has awakened the brotherly love in those settlers with whom we have the protestant religion and European traditions in common. They, too, have passed through a history of sorrow which is not unlike ours.

At all events, their sincere wish and willingness to sacrifice for us meets our spiritual need: it renews our hope. Without having suffered great need themselves, these colonists, inclined to selfishness, would not have been willing to sacrifice so much. Such is the good side of these times of terror. After all, even such a harrowing experience has its blessing. That is a bitter truth.

Khortiza, February 28, 1920

Linen from Tauria! Grown-up men show a childlike joy over a shirt, although it is used and mended; men who before never cared about their clothes and who always had plenty of them.

What a change! How much value do we attach now to an old shirt, worn and washed many times! And we would be mighty glad if every one of us had at least as much underwear as is necessary for a change. Not all are as lucky. Some have not even outer garments because the Anarchists carried off the very last ones when the owner was in bed. I know of a man who even now has to remain in bed because he has no clothes.

I hardly believe that in Western Europe they can guess of what value a pair of boots or shoes are to us. We go shod with wooden soles to which are attached linen or woolen ribbons cross-wise in such a way that we imagine we have sandals. Of course, the feet, in most cases, are not covered as we have no stockings; some cover their feet with pieces of cloth.

Khortiza, March 1, 1920

All is dark again! Our hope is gone. Between those brother colonists and us a fighting front line has been established. The armies of General Wrangel and the armies of the Bolsheviks continue their fight there. This is civil war.

We are living in complete isolation. The trains do not come, the mail does not arrive, the telegraph does not work. By the way, there is no technical possibility of wire communication, for the Ukrainian Anarchists—the anarchism did not grow in the North—have cut down the poles and wire and used them for some other purposes. Communication by horses is now the only possibility. Here at this place, however, all these good animals are taken away. When there has been left a miserable horse somewhere, it is used to cultivate, somehow, the soil of some little field. In the fall the fields could not be prepared because no power was available, and we lived under the oppressing domination of the Anarchists.

It seems that travelling has become more dangerous here than in the innermost parts of Africa. The day before yesterday three men of this settlement ventured on a journey to a distant place. Yesterday at noon the carter and the young married couple were found dead by the wayside. They had gone only fifteen miles. Surely they have been killed because of their horses and the wagon.

Khortiza, March 2, 1920

We are strangers in this country. He who did not know that before the war has learned this lesson a thousandfold during and after the war. Our Russian neighbours look upon us as upon cursed and damned "Nyemtze" who, in their land, have become wealthy. They completely ignore the fact that our ancestors, one hundred and twenty years ago, had been invited to settle here in order to cultivate these vast steppes which lay idle at that time. They do not want to recognize that these colonists, only through industrious and persistent work as well as through their own wise economical organization, and in no way through politics, have, in whole communities, arrived at better economical conditions than the Russian peasants. The colonists, who never had any political domination whatsoever, are surely not to blame for the fact that the Russian peasant remained in serfdom until 1861, and that he, after his liberation, had to find his poor crust of bread in the narrow furrow beside the giant estates of the noblemen.

Most of the colonists earnestly begin to meditate whether they can find another and better land to make homes in. It is surely enough what they have had to suffer. During the war they were regarded as step-children who often were treated worse than enemies. No other State would protect them either, for they were Russians. They were loyal, and for over a hundred years always had been loyal to their adopted country, without caring for politics, for Russia was not a democratic country where they were permitted to have political rights.

The Tzar government began to persecute them. Panslavists used all means of power, under the disguise of patriotism, to take from them their land and to exile them to Siberia.

Then broke out the revolution of 1917. This event saved the colonists from being expelled to Siberia. But after a while the October revolution came and with it civil war and anarchy.

No, we have no home, no protection, no prospect in this country. We want to leave. The watchword "Emigration" goes like a fire from place to place, kindling the hearts of men and women. Wherever you see two or three colonists together you may be sure they are talking about emigrating. That thought keeps us going, this idea only still gives us hope.

But how to accomplish it? Where to go? By what means? Will our hopes meet insurmountable hindrances? We are very anxious to know the answer to these questions and live in feelings of hope and doubt . . . .

Khortiza, March 5, 1920

It is true now: for weeks there has been a rumour of a massacre in the colonist settlement about one hundred and fifty miles west of the Dnieper river.

Yes, I had the list in my hand, the list of all those who fell in that carnage. And what did I see?

I cannot grasp it as I pass over the long list of names. It becomes dark before my eyes . . . two hundred and fourteen men—and I know them all. It is the place where I was born and where I grew up.

My father! and brothers, you? All dead? Murdered! I want to cry out so that the earth will tremble! Henry, my brother, why you? Why did not death take me instead? You had a wife, had seven small children; you restless fighter for truth and highest ideals. And none was too high for you!

Is there no end to wickedness, no limit to atrocity?

Sophocles, you, who wrote "Antigone," I yield the pen to you. I cannot proceed farther. . . .

THE END